

2015 NCAA CHAMPIONS

Sports Illustrated

+

APRIL 13, 2015

SI.COM

@SINOW

Against Wisconsin, dagger-sinking Tyus Jones was the brightest of the Blue Devils' many fantastic freshmen, scoring 23 points to take the Most Outstanding Player award.

Photograph by

GREG NELSON

For Sports Illustrated

WON. DONE.

DUKE
COACH K'S NEW
APPROACH
(FRESHMAN
STARTERS? ZONE D?)

SAME OLD
RESULTS
(TITLE NO. 5!)

BY MICHAEL ROSENBERG P. 28

PLUS

KENTUCKY'S
DREAM
DERAILED

BY LUKE WINN P. 34



YOUR BEST SHOT AT GOING PROFESSIONAL...

is to have a killer resume.

MONSTER
FIND BETTER

LINEUP

4.13.2015 | VOLUME 122 | NO. 15

NHL

44

NEW YORK ISLANDERS

They're a joke no longer—but their best season in decades is their final one in the burbs. Can hockey's most provincial team win another Cup before fleeing for Brooklyn?

By Jack Dickey

WONDER YEARS

In 1981 the Nassau Coliseum faithful and (from left) Anders Kallur, Wayne Merrick and Bob Nystrom celebrated the second of four straight Stanley Cups.

Features

NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP

28

Duke vs. Wisconsin

The two No. 1 seeds squared off in Indianapolis for the national title

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

40

Jayson Tatum

Family may determine where the top player in the class of 2016 plays
By Joan Niesen

BASEBALL

48

The Science Of Nap Time

Seeking advantage in one of the most basic of all human needs
By Matt McCarthy

SPECIAL REPORT

54

Milton Bradley

This is what domestic abuse looks like
By Michael McKnight with L. Jon Wertheim

Departments

2 **SI Digital**

4 **Leading Off**

10 **Inbox**

12 **Scorecard**

20 **Faces in The Crowd**

22 **Just My Type**
Dan Patrick: John McEnroe—*duh*—still calls his own shots

64 **Point After**
Steve Rushin: Scenes from a lifelong baseball romance

Photograph by:
Ray Stubblebine/AP

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FOR APRIL 13, 2015



SI
DIGITAL BONUS



Distinguished History

From the SI Vault
April 5, 1993

Who was the first designated hitter?
Ron Blomberg's name may be a bit of trivia, but the impact of the DH since 1973 has not been trivial
By Steve Wulf

*To read this and other stories from the SPORTS ILLUSTRATED archive, go to **SI.com/vault***



PLAY BALL!

The 2015 MLB season is under way, and SI.com will have its experts weighing in on the first week's action. Who came out of the dugout swinging? Which pitcher showed the most command? What are the early returns on the Padres' eleventh-hour trade with the Braves? How did A-Rod fare in the Bronx after his 18-month absence? Go to **SI.com/mlb** for all the answers and for complete coverage from around the majors. Plus, follow the daily box scores for every game live on our new Game Flash icon.

SI.COM'S Top Stories

1 Cardale's Quandry

For a roundup of last week's most popular stories on SI.com—including Pete Thamel's feature on Ohio State QB **Cardale Jones**, who after leading the Buckeyes to a national title is fighting for a starting spot—go to **SI.com/topstories**



2 April, Come She Will

SI experts make their picks for the 2015 MLB season

3 Beating Kentucky

Did Wisconsin follow SI's formula in its Final Four win?

4 Where Will Jameis Go?

All signs indicate the Bucs will pick Winston. Or will they?

5 Hating Bryce Harper

Why do so many dislike the Nationals' phenom?



SI PRO-FILES

As successful as some athletes are on the field, some find even more success after they retire. To see videos of athletes turned business leaders, go to **SI.com/pro-files**, a series from the editors of **SPORTS ILLUSTRATED** and **FORTUNE**.



Go to the Video

Looking for another way to stay in the game? Check out 120 Sports, the all-digital network that provides 24-hour access to highlights and analysis. In conjunction with **SPORTS ILLUSTRATED**, **MLB.com**, the **NBA**, the **NHL**, **NASCAR** and **Campus Insiders**, 120 Sports features live and on-demand videos driven by topics trending on social media. To see more, go to **120sports.com**

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Leading
Off



1
of
3

Opening Statements

BY BEN REITER

■ The Cubs knew for five months that they would be hosting the first game of the 2015 season, on Sunday night against the Cardinals, but still they didn't seem quite prepared for Opening Day. Wrigley Field—which is in the first year of a four-year, \$575 million face-lift—wasn't in game shape; its outfield stands were not teeming with bleacher creatures but instead covered by tarps, the result of construction delays stemming from an especially harsh Midwestern winter. Chicago's lineup wasn't in peak form either, as it lacked third baseman Kris Bryant, the 23-year-old überprospect who slugged 43 home runs in the minors last year and an MLB-high nine during the spring, but who was sent down to Triple A Iowa. (The official reason was to work on his game, but it was really to delay the first ticks of his major league service clock.) Perhaps not surprisingly, St. Louis won 3-0.

As Sunday night ▶

PHOTOGRAPH BY
STEPHEN GREEN
FOR SPORTS ILLUSTRATED





WRIGLEY
FIELD

Despite the loss,
Opening Night
was picture
perfect for the
Cubs' faithful.



Leading Off

+

2
of
3

in Chicago showed, Opening Day isn't the circle-the-date event it once was. Baseball is a year-round sport now, its winter as assiduously dissected as its summer used to be. (This year that process seemed to extend longer than ever, as new Padres general manager A.J. Preller pulled off his latest blockbuster—a deal for All-Star Braves closer Craig Kimbrel—less than two hours before Cubs lefty Jon Lester delivered the first pitch of the season.) Spring training, once a chance for players to quietly sweat out the whiskey and béarnaise sauce they'd consumed during the off-season, is now similarly well-covered; fans in need of a baseball fix have already had the opportunity to watch more than a month's worth of daily games, thanks to the anachronistically long exhibition schedule. And, due to MLB's expanded, 10-team playoff structure, the importance of racing out of the gates has been greatly diminished. As the Giants and the Royals—both wild-card teams in 2014—

SAFECO FIELD

Mike Trout led off the season for the Angels with a home run in Seattle ...

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
OTTO GREULE JR.
GETTY IMAGES (TROUT)
H. DARR BEISER
USA TODAY SPORTS (HARPER)





**NATIONALS
PARK**

... while in D.C.,
Bryce Harper
hit the third
Opening Day
homer of
his career.

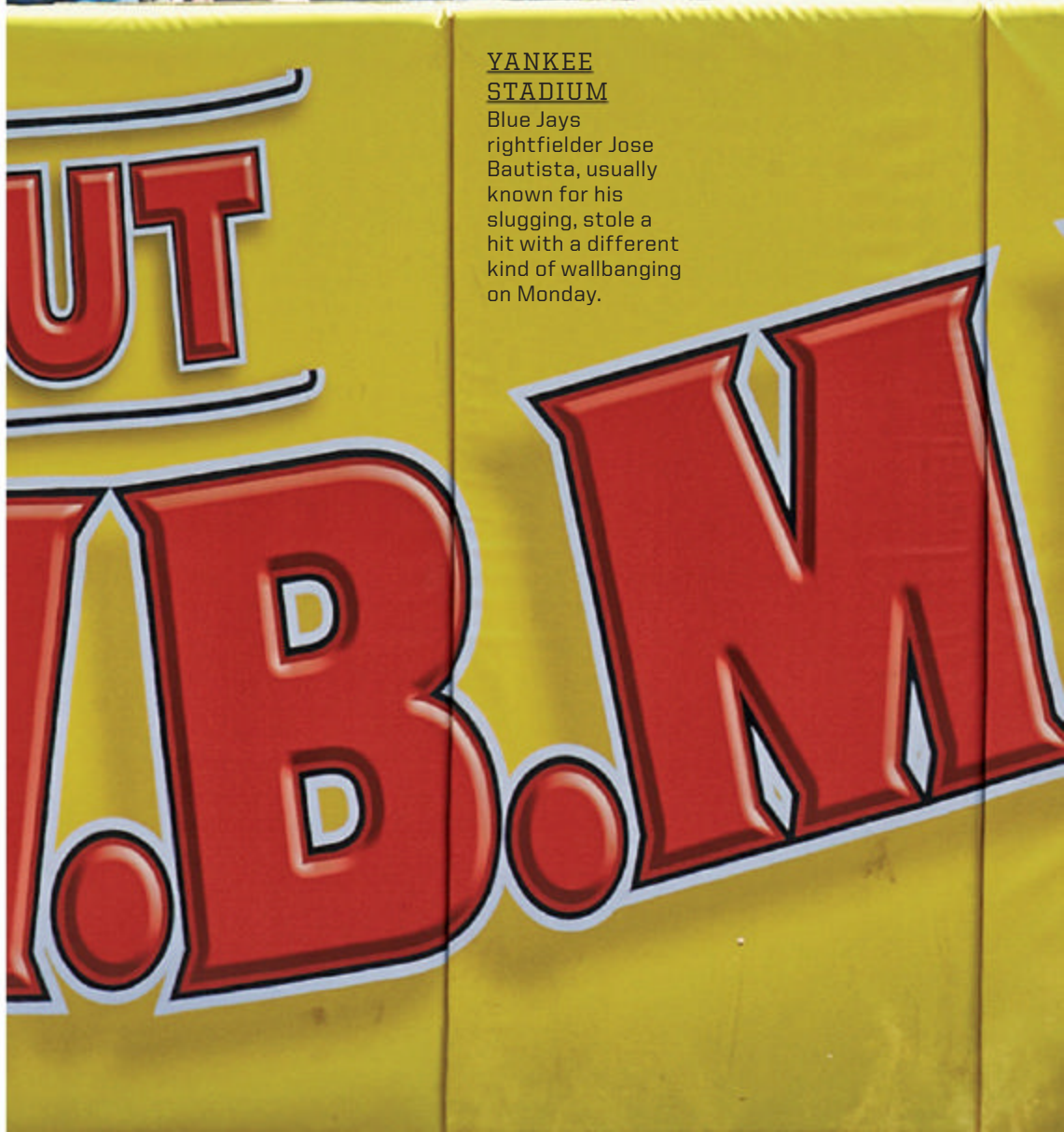


Leading Off

demonstrated last October, how you start is not nearly as crucial as how you finish.

Despite all that, Opening Day remains special because it's one of the only national events that encourages us to look back and ahead all at once. Those tarps draped over the bleachers? They were emblazoned with images of Ernie Banks, who died at 83 in January, and they encouraged us to remember not only Mr. Cub but also others who passed away since last year's Opening Day: Tony Gwynn, Minnie Miñoso, Oscar Taveras, Don Zimmer. Rising up above the tarps, in leftfield, was Wrigley's newly installed video board: At 7:19 p.m. CDT the 101-year-old ballpark showed its first-ever replay, a groundout by the Cardinals' Matt Carpenter to second baseman Tommy La Stella. That once unimaginable sight reminded us that time marches on, with new commissioner Rob Manfred in the league office, new shortstop Didi Gregorius in the Bronx and new hopes not just in San Diego but most everywhere. There's plenty of time, even for the Cubbies. □

PHOTOGRAPH BY
CHUCK SOLOMON
FOR SPORTS ILLUSTRATED



YANKEE STADIUM

Blue Jays rightfielder Jose Bautista, usually known for his slugging, stole a hit with a different kind of wallbanging on Monday.



ALBION



Preferre
Partner

INBOX

FOR MARCH 30, 2015



I don't think **Pete Rose** should be reinstated (SCORECARD), but if most fans want to see him in the Hall of Fame, I don't have a problem with that. But please don't ask me to believe anything about Pete's motives for wanting back in—other than the fact that he can charge an extra \$5 for his signature with the three letters, H-O-F, after his name.

James Stevens, San Antonio

Yes, Rose was a wonderful player, but he apparently felt that the rules did not pertain to him. Let's all remember that he *chose* banishment rather than having a hearing about his gambling. Nothing but repeated denials until he was cornered by the facts and wanted a deal.

Gregg H. Wright, Fallbrook, Calif.

I was dismayed to read that Rose said, "You can't be a coach and make the kind of money I need to live the way I want to live." How much money does he need? It's always more, more, more.

Robert J. Keren, Middlebury, Vt.

Even though Mark Harmon had the longer college football career, **Burt Reynolds** is still the sport's top thespian. He was a freshman halfback at Florida State in 1954, when he suffered a knee injury. Reynolds has 178 acting credits to Harmon's 78.

Jake Serratore
Hamilton, Va.



COVER

Why even bother to put my **Royals** on the cover, only to pick them to finish six games under .500 and fourth in the AL Central? A reason to believe? We don't need the pity.

Dan Deeble
Lenexa, Kans.

PAGE
46

Thank you for the outstanding article on **Steve Nash's** retirement. It is extremely rare to find a player who is able to transform not only his position but also the way the game is played. Nash was that player every time he stepped on the court.

William H. Noack
West River, Md.



PAGE
126

POINT AFTER
I agree with **Steve Rushin** about sports' beautiful sounds. Nothing is louder than the hush before the big putt on 18. Too bad the hush is invariably broken by some yahoo in the gallery screaming, "Get in the hole!"

Robert F. Sanchez
Tallahassee

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Edited by JIM GORANT + TED KEITH

SCORECARD

Stuck in
The Rough

Tiger Woods ran off the road in Florida five-and-a-half years ago, and the impact is still causing a sports marketing traffic jam

BY L. JON WERTHEIM



ILLUSTRATION BY D'ARROW

IN EARLY 2010

agent Max Eisenbud was in the process of negotiating a deal with Porsche for his client, Maria Sharapova. The discussions moved ponderously. Decisions that were usually made by a company's chief marketing officer required board approval. Like a tennis ball lolling across a net, documents moved back and forth. Eisenbud didn't need to be told why the process was slow: This was early fallout from the Tiger Woods scandal.

In November 2009, Woods had been revealed as a serial philanderer, a humiliating fall from grace. Equally embarrassed were a roster of large

international corporations that had paid tens of millions each year for the right to associate with Woods and his reputation for dignity and decorum. When Accenture designed a campaign around Woods, the company did not envision it being spoofed in a sexualized Internet meme.

Back to Sharapova: She finally got her Porsche deal, but it took nearly a year, and Eisenbud says that the contract was packed with lengthy morals clauses and rights that would terminate the association at a whiff of scandal. "Tiger was so squeaky clean, a lot of major, blue-chip companies were scared to align themselves with athletes. If this could

happen to him, who can you trust?" says Eisenbud, who works at IMG, Woods's previous agency. "But here's the thing: This [climate] hasn't changed. That fear never totally went away."

We can argue about what impact the events of Thanksgiving 2009 have had on Tiger's golf game. His aura may have vanished that night, or maybe, physical decline is the root cause of Woods's majors drought—which will reach 27 if he doesn't win this week's Masters.

But his chilling effect on sports marketing is unmistakable. Start with Woods himself. According to *Golf Digest*, he earned \$55.1 million in 2014, most

of it from endorsements. That marked his lowest annual take since 2000 and is a long way from his high of \$122.7 in '07 and well below his career average of \$72.1. Even more, the types of companies Woods represents have changed. The blue chips—AT&T, Accenture, Gatorade and Gillette—fled after the scandal. Nike remains, but Woods's website also lists Kowa (a Japanese manufacturing conglomerate), NetJets and MusclePharm (a "sports nutrition brand"). Recently Woods announced deals with Sol Republic headphones and Hero, a motorcycle and scooter company based in India.



Yet however many tens (hundreds?) of millions he cost himself, the negative impact he's had on colleagues' earning potential is, cumulatively, much deeper. The market has held up for some established stars, such as Phil Mickelson, Tom Brady and Peyton Manning, but not for all. Albert Pujols, maybe the best baseball player of the last decade, makes only \$2 million off the field. And younger athletes such as Mike Trout, Bryce Harper and Russell Westbrook have endorsement portfolios that don't seem equal to

their accomplishments and name recognition.

Meanwhile, as companies became cautious about jocks, other celebrities stepped up. Once, it was considered equally gauche and career-hindering for Hollywood actors to shill for products. At most, stars might jet overseas to shoot a commercial—then pray no one in the U.S. would see it. That ethos has softened, and now Catherine Zeta-Jones can endorse T-Mobile or Matt Damon can appear in a Super Bowl ad for Nationwide and we think nothing of it.

"Celebrity has become so fragmented," says Doug Shabelman, president of Burns Entertainment & Sports Marketing, a Chicago-area firm that matches celebrities with endorsement opportunities.

"You have reality stars, bloggers, YouTube stars, chefs—everyone from the *Duck Dynasty* guys to Rachael Ray. And they're competing for the deals that used to go to athletes."

Shabelman adds that Woods isn't solely to blame. "Lance Armstrong and Kobe Bryant, they contributed to this too." Still, Woods went to great measures to construct an image of decorum and restraint. That veneer was shattered. And, years later, countless other athletes continue to pay a financial price. A Tiger Effect, you might call it. □

GO FIGURE

16



Consecutive seasons the Spurs have won at least 50 games, an NBA record. The streak began in 1999-2000, one year after San Antonio won its first NBA title after going 37-13 in the lockout-shortened 50-game regular season.



2

Consecutive seasons the Lakers have lost at least 50 games, the first time that's happened in franchise history. L.A.'s 56 losses are its most ever. The Lakers must go 3-3 in their final six games to keep their status as the only NBA team without a 60-loss season.

0

Bids on a football autographed by Bears quarterback **Jay Cutler** during a March 26 auction for the Anti-Cruelty Society, a pet adoption charity. Last Thursday a man reportedly offered \$100 for the football so he could give it to his son for his birthday.

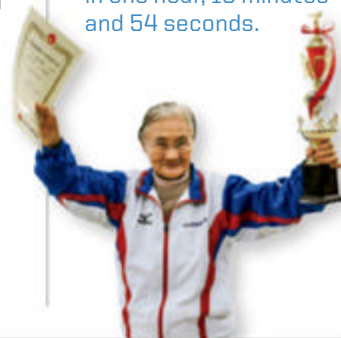


\$1,478.49

Amount Devils center Scott Gomez was fined for elbowing the Canadiens' Alexei Emelin in the face last Saturday. It is the maximum allowable amount under the CBA.

100

Age of **Mieko Nagaoka** of Japan, who last Saturday became the first centenarian to complete a 1,500-meter race in a 25-meter pool. She swam the backstroke in one hour, 15 minutes and 54 seconds.



The Sound and the Fury

How much do forfeited draft picks really hurt?

THE FALCONS FINISHED in the top 10 in NFL attendance last season but still thought it necessary to pump recorded crowd noise into the Georgia Dome—a violation of the NFL's rules that led to a league-imposed \$350,000 fine and the forfeit of a 2016 fifth-round draft pick. It's too soon to know what pick Atlanta will have in '16, but based on their '15 pick (No. 146), here's a historical look at the type of player they could be missing out on. For context, results for the Patriots' lost first-rounder (Spygate) and the 49ers' sacrificed fifth-rounder (tampering), both from '08, are shown as well. —Angelina Matarozzi

YR	PICK 146 	PICK 31 	PICK 142 
'14	WR DEVIN STREET DAL ☹	CB BRADLEY ROBY DEN ☺	WR RYAN GRANT WAS ☺
'13	DE QUANTERUS SMITH DEN ☹	C TRAVIS FREDERICK DAL ☺	DE LAVAR EDWARDS TEN ☹
'12	CB DEQUAN MENZIE KC ☹	RB DOUG MARTIN TB ☺	LB BRANDON MARSHALL JAX ☺
'11	DB DEJON GOMES WAS ☺	DE CAMERON HEYWARD PIT ☺	DE KARL KLUG TEN ☺
'10	DT CAM THOMAS SD ☺	DE JERRY HUGHES IND ☺	DE CAMERON SHEFFIELD KC ☹
'09	LB SCOTT MCKILLOP SF ☹	RB BEANIE WELLS ARI ☺	P KEVIN HUBER CIN ☺
'08	FB JEROME FELTON DET ☺	DB KENNY PHILLIPS NYG ☺	CB ZACK BOWMAN CHI ☺
'07	WR AUNDRAE ALLISON MIN ☹	TE GREG OLSEN CHI ☺	WR STEVE BREASTON ARI ☺
'06	SS DAWAN LANDRY BAL ☺	CB KELLY JENNINGS SEA ☺	LB BRANDON JOHNSON ARI ☺
'05	DE TRENT COLE PHI ☺	DT MIKE PATTERSON PHI ☺	RB DAMIEN NASH TEN ☹

KEY: GOOD PICK ☺ BAD PICK ☹ NEUTRAL PICK ☺

THEY
SAID IT

"I don't think being big at the quarterback position is a bad thing."

Jared Lorenzen

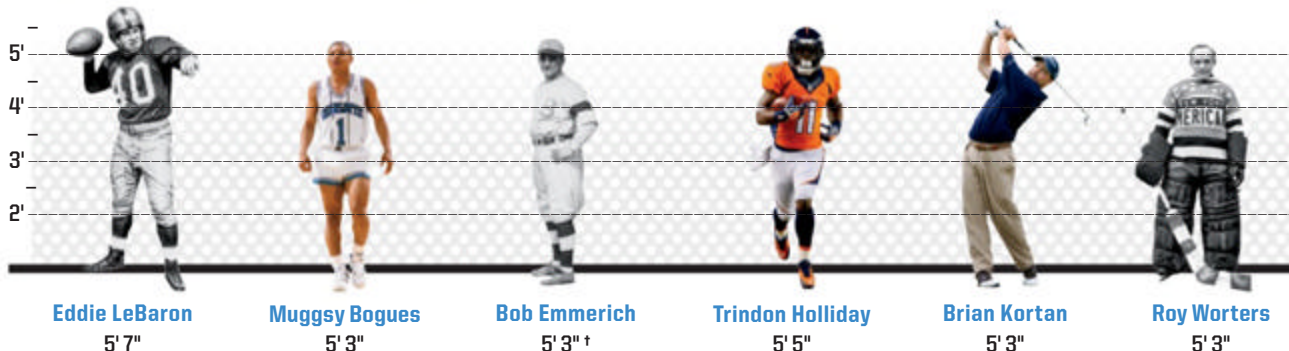
the 300-plus-pound QB known as the Hefty Lefty, on photos of Jameis Winston in which he appears a bit doughy.



Short and Sweet

In honor of a little giant, the shortest players by sport

ON APRIL 1 former NFL quarterback Eddie LeBaron died at 85 in Stockton, Calif. A decorated Korean War veteran who stood only 5' 7", LeBaron was known as the Little General during his 11-year career, from 1952 through '63, with Washington and Dallas. Eagles linebacker Chuck Bednarik once called him "the greatest little football player that ever lived," but he was not the shortest. Here, sport by sport, are the smallest players on record.*



*AMONG PLAYERS WHO'VE APPEARED IN MORE THAN ONE GAME. *EMMERICH IS ONE OF FOUR 5' 3" PLAYERS IN MLB HISTORY (YO-YO DAVALILLO, STUBBY MAGNER, MIKE MCCORMACK)

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Individual results
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JUBLIA is an FDA-approved prescription topical solution proven to treat toenail fungus (onychomycosis).

JUBLIA is specifically formulated to reach the site of onychomycosis and fight the fungus that can live beneath the toenail — allowing some patients to have clearer toenails grow back. It's time to tackle toenail fungus.

Indication

JUBLIA (efinaconazole) Topical Solution, 10% is a prescription medicine used to treat fungal infections of the toenails.

Important Safety Information

- JUBLIA is for use on nails and surrounding skin only. Do not use JUBLIA in your mouth, eyes, or vagina. Use it exactly as instructed by your doctor.
- It is not known whether JUBLIA is effective in children.
- Before you use JUBLIA, tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including if you are or plan to become pregnant, are breastfeeding, or plan to breastfeed, because it is not known whether JUBLIA can harm an unborn fetus or nursing infant. Tell your doctor about all medications you are taking, and whether you have any other nail infections.



Ask your doctor
if JUBLIA is right
for you and visit
JubliaRx.com

- JUBLIA is flammable. Avoid heat and flame while applying JUBLIA to your toenail.
- Avoid pedicures, use of nail polish, or cosmetic nail products while using JUBLIA.
- JUBLIA may cause irritation at the treated site. The most common side effects include: ingrown toenail, redness, itching, swelling, burning or stinging, blisters, and pain. Tell your doctor about any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Patient Information for JUBLIA on next page.



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PATIENT INFORMATION

JUBLIA (joo-blee-uh)

(efinaconazole) Topical Solution, 10%

This Patient Information does not include all the information needed to use JUBLIA safely and effectively. Please see full Prescribing Information.

Important information: JUBLIA is for use on toenails and surrounding skin only. Do not use JUBLIA in your mouth, eyes, or vagina.

What is JUBLIA?

JUBLIA is a prescription medicine used to treat fungal infections of the toenails. It is not known if JUBLIA is safe and effective in children.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using JUBLIA?

Before you use JUBLIA, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if JUBLIA can harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if JUBLIA passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

How should I use JUBLIA?

See the "Instructions for Use" at the end of this Patient Information leaflet for detailed information about the right way to use JUBLIA.

- Use JUBLIA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to use it. Apply JUBLIA to your affected toenails 1 time each day. Wait for at least 10 minutes after showering, bathing or washing before applying JUBLIA. JUBLIA is used for 48 weeks.

What should I avoid while using JUBLIA?

- JUBLIA is flammable. Avoid heat and flame while applying JUBLIA to your toenail.
- Avoid pedicures, use of nail polish, or cosmetic nail products, while using JUBLIA.

What are the possible side effects of JUBLIA?

JUBLIA may cause irritation at the treated site. The most common side effects include: ingrown toenail, redness, itching, swelling, burning or stinging, blisters, and pain. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or that does not go away.

These are not all the possible side effects of JUBLIA.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

How should I store JUBLIA?

- Store JUBLIA at room temperature, between 68°F to 77°F (20°C to 25°C). Do not freeze JUBLIA.
- Keep the bottle tightly closed and store in an upright position.
- JUBLIA is flammable. Keep away from heat and flame.

Keep JUBLIA and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about the safe and effective use of JUBLIA

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for information about JUBLIA that is written for health professionals. Do not use JUBLIA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give JUBLIA to other people, even if they have the same condition you have. It may harm them.

What are the ingredients in JUBLIA?

Active ingredients: efinaconazole

Inactive ingredients: alcohol, anhydrous citric acid, butylated hydroxytoluene, C12-15 alkyl lactate, cyclomethicone, diisopropyl adipate, disodium edetate, and purified water.

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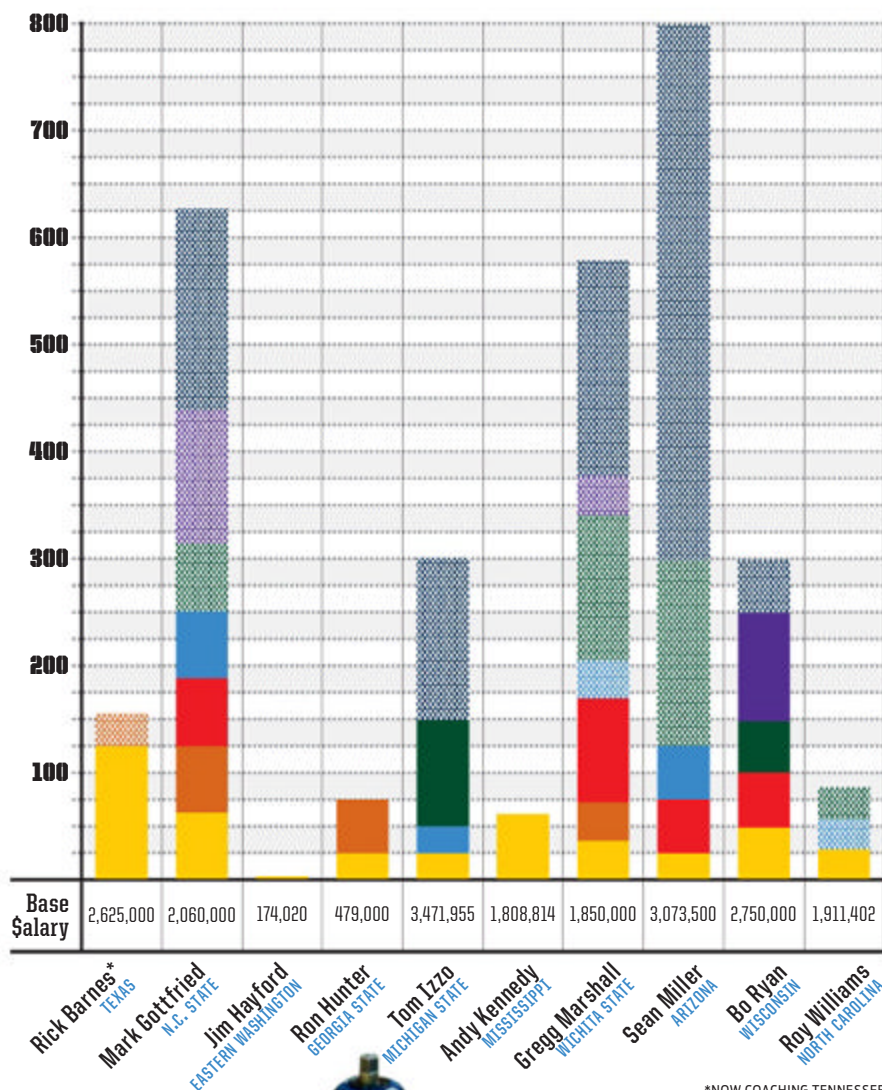
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EXTRA MUSTARD

Advance Pay

What coaches can make by moving on in March

KEY: Round of 64 Round of 32
Sweet 16 Elite Eight
Final Four Title Game
Championship Unearned Bonus



*NOW COACHING TENNESSEE

FOR FANS, MARCH is a time to jump into an NCAA tournament pool; for coaches, it's a chance to dip into the bonus pool. Who earns what for reaching which round says a lot about a school's expectations. Virginia's Tony Bennett stood to make \$1 million for a title. Kentucky's John Calipari has no performance bonuses, but then, with a salary of \$6.4 million—among the highest—he's always supposed to win.



BREAKOUT PERFORMER

HOT

Shaka Smart

In the last 15 months the coaching in Austin went from Brown (Mack) and Barnes (Rick) to Strong (Charlie) and Smart (Shaka).

Bill Raftery

Calling his first Final Four at 71, he delivered—with a kiss.

Tiger Woods

He's playing at Augusta with a rebuilt short game. He's in more danger of crashing than his girlfriend.

Bob Knight

In a bloodless coup at ESPN, the General was relieved of his command.

Ashley Judd

The cancellation of *Sisters* should have told TV execs that people don't want to see her on air that often.



NOT

SIGN OF THE APOCALYPSE



Upgrades at the Ohio State College of Veterinary Medicine include a dog-walking area with a new fire hydrant.

TRAINING WITH

+

High Riser

UConn corner Byron Jones jumped up draft boards with an explosive combine showing

TO GMS, COACHES and scouts at the NFL combine, Connecticut cornerback Byron Jones's numbers jumped out. The 6' 1" 199-pounder leaped 12' 3" in the broad jump (shattering both the combine and world records) and 44½ inches in the vertical jump (just short of the year's best of 45 inches). And at UConn's pro day last week Jones ran 40 yards in 4.36 seconds.

That sort of explosiveness indicates that Jones has great genetics, but also that he has worked hard to make the most of his natural abilities. Jones spent the weeks before the combine training at the EXOS facility in Pensacola, Fla., lifting weights and partaking in a movement training program in which he pushed sleds

and pulled against resistance bands to hone his form and boost his burst.

The concept behind Jones's training is "post-activation potentiation"—combining high-load strength movements (a squat with weights) with similar, lightweight plyometrics (a squat jump with no weight). "Having an athlete perform a resisted rep, rest and then follow that with an unresisted rep can produce an increase in power output and explosiveness,"

says Stefan Underwood, Jones's trainer.

SI's Chris Burke thinks Jones secured a spot in the second round, but he knows it will come down to his intangibles. "My biggest asset is my intelligence," he says. "I don't think the measurements have a lot to do with football, but I expect to use my athleticism to my advantage."

Playing cornerback in the NFL is a unique challenge, but Jones is ready to make the jump. —*Jamie Lisanti*



EDGE

Presented by

For more athlete training profiles and tips, go to SI.com/trainingwith

When working on everything from acceleration and drive to jumps, Jones uses a system of pulleys and bungees to do three sets of four jumps (two resisted, two unresisted) with one minute in between. Below he shows off his form.



1 With feet shoulder-width apart, stretch your arms behind you and rise onto the balls of your feet.

2 Begin to swing your arms forward and bend your knees and hips.

3 Drive your legs off the ground and simultaneously throw your arms up and forward.

4 Once airborne, extend hips up and forward, and throw your feet forward to keep momentum.

5 Land flat-footed and absorb the impact by bending the knees and hips.

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Sports Illustrated
HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

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■ **Wyatt Johnson**, a junior at Payson High in Utah, is 5' 3" and 130 pounds, not counting his ten-gallon hat, but on top of a bucking bronco he rides as tall as any cowboy. Last year, only his second riding bareback, he rallied from last place in the Utah High School Rodeo Association standings to win five of six remaining events and qualify for states, where he won the title. He also finished eighth in bull riding. "Having a good ride is the greatest feeling in the world," Wyatt says. "It's like a championship football game and you win, but it's just you who won." Competing in the adult Rocky Mountain Professional Rodeo Association, he finished third in the 2014 finals. Wyatt also volunteers at rodeos for special-needs kids, who ride replica livestock. "It feels good to express what we do to other people who can't physically do it," he says. "It makes me feel grateful and humble." For more on Wyatt, and to nominate your own candidate, visit SI.com/HSathlete



Arike Ogunbowale | *Milwaukee* | *Basketball*

Arike, a 5' 9" senior guard at Divine Savior Holy Angels High, scored a state tournament record 55 points to lead the Dashers to an 86-76 overtime win over Middleton High in the Division 1 semifinals. She then scored 27 in a 64-29 championship win over D.C. Everest [Schofield] High. A three-time Wisconsin AP player of the year, Arike will play at Notre Dame.



Joel Wincowski | *Lake George, N.Y.* | *Basketball*

Joel, a 6' 2" senior guard at Lake George High, scored 30 points, including a trey with 1.6 seconds left, to lead the Warriors to a 53-50 win over Waterville High for the Class C state title. He ended his career with 2,615 points—No. 5 all time in New York—breaking the Section II record set by Jimmer Fredette in 2007. Joel will play at Maryland-Baltimore County.



Bailey DuPay | *Northfield, Minn.* | *Gymnastics, Diving*

Bailey, a senior at Northfield High, scored 39.05 points to become Minnesota's first gymnast to win three straight Class 2A all-around titles. She's also the first to score 39 or better twice in the state meet. [She had a 39.0875 in 2014.] Bailey, who is a three-time Class A state one-meter diving champion as well, will dive next year at Minnesota State-Mankato.

FACES IN THE CROWD

Edited By **ALEXANDRA FENWICK**



Zach Pederson | *Chandler, Ariz.* | *Baseball*

Zach, a senior righthander at Hamilton High, threw a seven-inning perfect game for a 3-0 win over Pinnacle [Phoenix] High. It was the first perfect game in Huskies history. Last season Zach had a 2.42 ERA and a 12-0 record, including an 8-4 victory over Mesquite [Gilbert] High for the Division I state championship. He will play at Yavapai College in Prescott.



Rachel Cohen | *Greenwood Village, Colo.* | *Sport Climbing*

Rachel, a junior at Cherry Creek High, won the Central Region title to qualify for the Colorado High School Climbing League championships, then took the state title by 201 points, with 6,373. The runner-up at last year's competition, Rachel's wins capped a comeback from dislocating her right elbow in a 15-foot fall at states as a freshman.



Michael Stigler | *Canyon, Texas* | *Track and Field*

Stigler, a senior at Kansas, won the 400-meter hurdles at the Texas Relays in 48.44 seconds, the best time in the world this year. His performance, which also set meet and school records, would have ranked in the top 10 in the world each of the last two years. Stigler was the NCAA runner-up in the event in 2013 and '14.

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A dramatic scene featuring a Marine Corps helicopter in flight against a cloudy sky. Below, soldiers in camouflage gear are running across a sandy desert landscape, with an amphibious tank in the background.

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JUST MY TYPE

→ Interview by **DAN PATRICK**

DAN PATRICK: *What kind of awards do you have displayed in your house?*

JOHN MCENROE: I have [one of my eight] Wimbledon trophies [there]. At one time I had a lot of seniors trophies, but I realized those were kind of boring. Deep down I appreciate a good piece of art more than I would a trophy.

DP: *What kind of art do you invest in?*

JM: I'm a little bit more risky. [I like] more contemporary living artists. I'm a bit all over the place. Whatever I'm feeling at the moment. To me, an artist is a lot like a tennis player. You're on your own, out there by yourself. You feel naked and exposed. You go to an opening, and people can ridicule it and say it's the worst thing they ever saw. In tennis, you could be in front of 20,000 people and lay an egg. It's brought me a lot of pleasure. I've been collecting since my buddy Vitas Gerulaitis took me around when I was 20. Started bringing me to places in SoHo [New York City], and places like CBGB and also art galleries.

DP: *Did you ever see the Ramones and any of the classic punk acts at CBGB?*

JM: Unfortunately I was a little bit young for that. I was 18 in 1977, and [punk music] was already



JOHN MCENROE

REBEL WITH A CAUSE

Tennis's ageless bad boy is still shaking things up on the court, this time on the PowerShares Series circuit, which eliminates linespeople and lets players make the calls.

happening. The earliest look I got at a punk band was in '79, the Clash in London.

DP: *Did you see the Clash while you were at Wimbledon?*

JM: Yup. That was inspiring. At the time, I was being called the punk of tennis. [People were] comparing me to some of those types of bands, which I found rather humorous.

DP: *What did you have in common with those bands at the time?*

JM: We were rallying against authority. Having grown up in New York City, I certainly clashed [with the tennis establishment]. It was like oil and water. I think at the same time they've learned some of what I was about was good also. What I was pushing for and trying to bring to the table is what the sport still needs. We still should be looked at the way other sports are, not some elitist sport that the 1% plays.

DP: *Better chance for the Knicks to win a championship or an American male to win a Grand Slam title?*

JM: What's the time frame?

DP: *I'll give you five years.*

JM: We have a better chance of an American male winning a U.S. Open or Wimbledon title.

DP: *You're competing in the PowerShares Series with players making their own calls. Would you have been in favor of replay early in your career?*

JM: Absolutely. I would have just found someone else to yell at. □

GUEST SHOTS SAY WHAT?



ESPN's **Jay Williams** believes a change

in the shot clock rules is necessary to revitalize the college game. "The fact that we still have a 35-second shot clock is outrageous," Williams said. "You could have three plays within one possession. That's crazy." ... Pelicans center and former Kentucky star

Anthony Davis thinks



he would have been a force for this year's

Wildcats: "Throw me in there blocking shots, no team would ever score against us." ... Dallas radio broadcaster

Tim Cowlshaw asked female Cowboys fans to call in to complain about the team's signing of DE Greg



Hardy, who had charges of domestic

violence against him dropped. "We got [only] three callers, and [they were] fully in support of it," Cowlshaw said. "Cowboys fans want to get that next victory more than they care about the moral implications."

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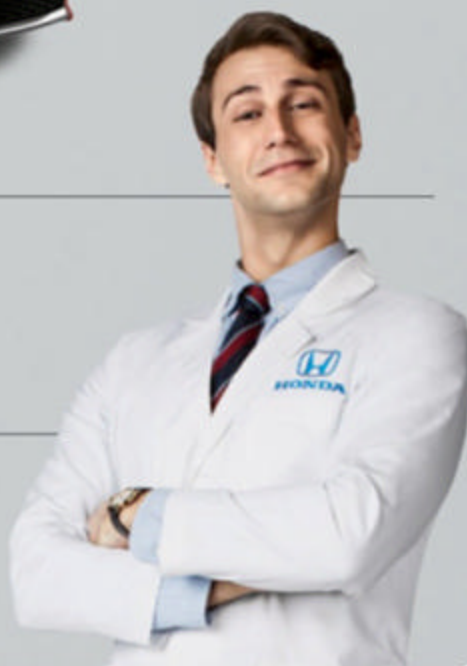


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The Case for . . . The Local Hero

BY ALEXANDER WOLFF

THE DECISION BY

St. John's to bring back former star Chris Mullin to lead its basketball program, despite his never having coached at any level, may seem like a huge risk. It's not.

The high ball screens and drive-and-dish guards commonplace in the NBA are now standard in college basketball too, so Mullin won't be tactically out of his element. Recruits are sure to trust a 16-year NBA veteran and original Dream Team alumnus, who spent time in the front offices of the Warriors and the Kings, to guide them to the next level. Mullin's forthrightness about the drinking problem that nearly ended his Hall of Fame career before it began should help him impart the kinds of life lessons that young players need and parents want taught. All of which suggests that, compared with other NBA players who had no bench experience and returned to their hometowns to coach their alma maters, he's more likely to wind up a Fred Hoiberg (four NCAA appearances in five seasons thus far at Iowa State) than a Clyde Drexler (19–39 before quitting in 2000 after two years at Houston).

But the most auspicious part of the Mullin hiring lies in the contrast with his predecessor, Steve Lavin, whose California pedigree always made him an outsider in Queens. In five seasons Lavin made just two NCAA tournaments and never developed good



2,440

Career points at St. John's for Chris Mullin, the most in school history.

2

Final Four visits for the Red Storm, most recently in 1985, Mullin's senior year.

enough relationships with the high school coaches who control New York City talent. His final team included no significant contributor from New York, New Jersey or Connecticut. And after his first recruiting class, in 2011, he failed to sign a star from the five boroughs.

Of course just because the last St. John's team to reach the Final Four, in 1985, included New Yorker Lou Carnesecca on the bench and outer-borough All-Americans Mullin and Walter Berry on the floor, doesn't guarantee that the same regionalist formula will work today. But there's no more credible figure to persuade greater New York City kids to choose St. John's over Duke and Virginia than Mullin, who once made that very decision and never looked back. That's the most striking part of the St. John's gambit: the audacious concession that maybe the

Red Storm aren't cut out to be a national program but rather one that, by being unabashedly rooted in New York City, could still make a national mark.

Thirty-five years ago, before ESPN nationalized the game with a cosmic Big (Monday) Bang, the very charm of college basketball lay in its regional nature. Schools with little or no football profile, such as DePaul under Ray Meyer and Memphis State under Larry Finch, turned the cities of Chicago and Memphis into subsistence college hoops ecosystems, with totemic figures from those programs' pasts taking local talent on rides deep into the NCAA tournament. As the reborn Big East continues to settle into its identity as a football-free conference of urban Catholic schools, the league could find guidance in that tradition. And as the college game suffers from aesthetic shortcomings and an attendant slump in interest during the regular season, any way to stoke excitement is worth a try.

If the 1,000 people who showed up at Carnesecca Arena on April 1 to see Mullin's introduction are any indication, the crowd at the Johnnies' first game in Madison Square Garden next season promises to be big and boisterous. Former NBA coach and referee Charley Eckman liked to say that "there are only two great plays—*South Pacific* and put the ball in the basket." Mullin was the Olivier of the latter. It's a skill that's the same regardless of venue, whether it be the summer-stock stage of the AAU circuit or, as the Red Storm's bet would have it, Broadway. And if Mullin replicates Hoiberg's success, schools in other towns would be wise to consider the same move. □

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JONES TAKES INDY

The unflappable first-year point guard (5) slashed through Wisconsin's defense, scoring 10 of his 23 points in the final seven minutes.

NCAA TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS

THE DEVILS



No, Mike Krzyzewski didn't sell his soul to get title No. 5. But the conservative paragon did embrace some once-unfathomable ideas to nurture a collection of callow talent into yet another championship team

BY MICHAEL ROSENBERG

Photograph by
John W. McDonough
For Sports Illustrated



G

O AHEAD. Snicker when Duke freshman point guard Tyus Jones, the Most Outstanding Player of the Final Four, talks about his program's "family atmosphere." But close your eyes when you do it, O.K.?

That way you won't see senior guard Quinn Cook rush into the stands, bawling, just to hug former Duke playmaker Nolan Smith and say, "Thank you! Thank you!" You won't see Jones and 6' 11" center Jahlil Okafor, a player will likely jump to the NBA after a single season, rolling around the Lucas Oil Stadium floor in a teary embrace, looking like they never want to leave at all.

And please look away when a golf cart rolls toward a postgame press conference and one of the passengers, Mike Krzyzewski, tells the driver, *Stop*. Otherwise you'll see Coach K get off, walk back to his five-year-old grandson, John David Spatola, and say, "I didn't give you a hug yet."

And you'll hear John David reply, "Congratulations, Poppy."



Ignore it. Tell yourself that none of this matters and Duke beat Wisconsin, 68–63, for the national championship simply because of talent. It's easier that way. Applaud when Wisconsin coach Bo Ryan tells CBS, "We don't do 'rent-a-player,'" and be done with it.

But if renting a player were so easy, Duke would have rented more. The Blue Devils had eight scholarship players this season. They couldn't even scrimmage. Practices were an hour, tops.

And down 48–39 to the Badgers in the second half on Monday, Krzyzewski left his two most talented post players, Okafor and freshman Justise Winslow, on the bench. They were in foul trouble, and the coach didn't want them scared to play defense. He trusted junior forward Amile Jefferson and sophomore guard Matt Jones to frustrate Wisconsin stars Sam Dekker and Frank Kaminsky, and they did. If Jefferson and Jones are rentals, they are on a four-year lease.

Meanwhile, one-and-probably-three-more freshman guard Grayson Allen scored eight straight Duke points midway through

ALLEN WRENCH
Kaminsky (44) and the Badgers were not counting on the seldom-used guard (3) scoring 16 critical points while star center Okafor (15) had just 10.

In the end this looked like a classic Duke team. But in the beginning and the middle the Blue Devils—loaded but young, selfless but sloppy—weren't supposed to win the championship.

the second half and finished with 16, second most among the Blue Devils after Tyus Jones's 23. You can snicker at Allen too. As a talented white kid at Duke, he is destined to be one of the most hated players in the country; that was practically on his letter of intent. ("We think he looks just like our second grandson, Michael Savarino," says Krzyzewski's wife, Mickie.)

But did you know Allen won the dunk contest at the McDonald's All-American game last year? Or that even though Allen spent most of the season on the bench, he was still the last guy to leave practice? Allen is not easy to label, and neither is his team. The Blue Devils were loaded but young, selfless but sometimes sloppy, occasionally overpowering but laughably thin. In the end they played like a classic Duke team. But in the beginning and the middle, they weren't supposed to win the championship.

This was Kentucky's year. Everybody could see it. Then Wisconsin beat Kentucky, and Duke beat Wisconsin. Instead of a





team making history and going 40–0, the coach with the most wins ever led the most successful program of the modern era to another national title. It was a testament to the value of losing.

IF YOU handle losses the right way, then losses can be very beneficial,” Krzyzewski said last week. “What you do with a win or loss determines how much better you are going to be. We’ve always tried to use the losses as learning experiences and not just punish somebody.”

Duke’s first loss of the season, to North Carolina State on Jan. 11, was almost welcome. The Blue Devils had been 14–0 and the consensus No. 2 team in the country in every poll taken outside of their basketball offices. Coaches worried that their team was coasting. Associate head coach Jeff Capel says, “We knew as a staff, something’s missing. We had been telling our team, ‘We’re not playing as well.’ The urgency was not there.”

But it is hard to convince young players that something is missing when they have won every game by at least eight points. The Wolfpack whipped Duke 87–75, and Okafor remembers “going into the locker room, just feeling like the world ended.” Duke was headed home

FLOOR SHOW

Keeping Okafor (below, middle) and Winslow (right, with ball) contained took a toll on the Badgers.



to play Miami, and the coaches hoped the players had learned their lesson. They hadn’t. Okafor admits, “We kind of took for granted that it was a home game and we were going to win.” The Hurricanes drilled the Blue Devils 90–74.

Duke had given up 177 points in two games, which is hard to do in this offensively challenged era unless you shoot on your opponent’s basket. Opposing guards were getting to the rim at will because the young Blue Devils lacked defensive discipline.



*This Duke team would never be as refined as Wisconsin. But its coaches would find ways to hide the rough edges and **allow the players’ athleticism and skill to take over.***

Krzyzewski had boxed himself into a corner. It was full of McDonald’s All-Americans, but it was still a corner. For most of his career, Krzyzewski was the epitome of the seniors-first coach. He refused to hang a banner to celebrate his team’s 1990 Final Four run until the last of that team’s seniors graduated nine years later. In the late 1990s, when players started going directly from high school to the NBA, Krzyzewski didn’t bother recruiting any potential preps-to-pros guys.

Now he had built a team around one senior, Cook, and three extremely talented freshmen: Okafor, Winslow and Jones. Okafor and Winslow are expected to be NBA lottery picks this summer, and Jones could leave as well. Duke had talent on its side but not time.

“I can’t get to the level of playing defense like my 2001 [championship] team unless I have a number of older guys,” Krzyzewski said before the Final Four. “It takes that long to



be that good. So I have to accept a certain amount of slippage both offensively and defensively, and that means maybe trying out some other things.”

Krzyzewski and his assistants stayed up until 5 a.m. after the Miami game, trying to plan their next move. The head coach finally suggested something that for him was once borderline heresy: *Let’s play some zone*. Proposing a switch to Carolina blue uniforms might have been more stunning—but only a little bit. Two generations of Blue Devils had played stifling man-to-man defense, harassing point guards and denying passing lanes. Duke installed a 2–3 zone for the team’s trip to No. 6–ranked Louisville on Jan. 17. The Blue Devils held the Cardinals to 29.5% shooting and an anemic 0.87 points per possession, and they won 63–52. A new blueprint was being drawn. This Duke team would never be as refined as a veteran group like Wisconsin. But its coaches would find ways to hide the rough edges and allow the players’ athleticism and skill to take over.

Eleven days later Duke suffered loss number three, at Notre Dame, 77–73. Nobody thought it was the end of the world—the Fighting Irish were an elite team that hit some extremely tough shots, and the Blue Devils missed some they would normally make. But Krzyzewski identified another problem: “We were thinking about offense when we went to defense.”

He urged his players to clamp down defensively, and he had an assist from a player who would have fit in well on his 1991, ’92, 2001 or ’10 champions: Cook, who had never won an ACC regular-season or tournament championship, and had never played in a Final Four.

On Jan. 29, two days before the team’s next game, at No. 2 Virginia, junior guard Rasheed Sulaimon was dismissed from the team for reasons that have never been fully specified, leaving Duke with just eight scholarship players. While Cook harped on his young teammates to defend regardless of whether they made shots, the coaches blew more strategic smoke to hide their team’s flaws. At a morning walkthrough a few hours before the game against the Cavs, they introduced a 1-2-2 zone, with the athletic Winslow at the top. During a timeout that night, Krzyzewski asked his players if they were ready to use it. They were, and they won 69–63.

On Feb. 18, Duke beat North Carolina in overtime but also suffered a loss: Okafor rolled his left ankle in the first half and missed the next game, against Clemson. Duke could have

SI.COM



This is our annual apology for the absence of coverage of the NCAA women’s final, between UConn and Notre Dame, which took place after our Monday deadline. All the coverage we would love to have included this week can be found at SI.com/cbb and in next week’s issue.

–The Editors



replaced him with the only other center on the roster, 7-foot junior Marshall Plumlee. Instead, 6' 5" Matt Jones joined the starting lineup, and Winslow slid from small forward to power forward. The seemingly temporary move soon became permanent and transformed the team.

Winslow is only 6' 6" and 225 pounds, but he uses his 6' 10" wingspan and his relentless energy to bother opposing power forwards. On offense Winslow is too quick for bigger players to guard, and if they sag off him, he goes from an average shooter to a good one. In the 12 games after he moved to power forward, Winslow shot 57.5% from the field and 53.6% from three.

Duke was rolling but still tinkering. On the morning of their first ACC tournament game, against N.C. State, the Blue Devils installed yet another zone: a 1-3-1. They held the Wolfpack to 35.7% shooting in a 24-point win.

They had won 12 straight games and were cruising toward a No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament; that weekend Winslow's dad, Rickie, booked his trip from his home in Houston to Indianapolis for the Final Four. But there would be one more loss, and one more lesson that came with it.

On March 13, the day after whipping N.C. State, Duke

DEVILISH DEFENDER

Allen pestered Traevon Jackson (12), drawing a momentum-shifting foul in the second half.



KENTUCKY-WISCONSIN

AN IMPERFECT ENDING

Kentucky's magical run this season seemed made for Hollywood—until Wisconsin flipped the script

BY LUKE WINN



ON THE NIGHT before their 39th game of the season, the unbeaten Kentucky Wildcats gathered in coach John Calipari's suite at the Marriott Indianapolis Downtown, and he showed them footage of an old race. All season he had been molding them mentally as much or more than he had been coaching their basketball skills, getting them to accept diminished playing time and smaller scoring roles in a nine- or 10-man rotation that could chase perfection while doing no damage to their draft stock. They were always less concerned about their opponents than they were about being the best versions of themselves, because they believed they had more talent, more size and more depth than anyone else. And on the final weekend of the season, Calipari wanted them to face history head-on.

What he showed them was the final Triple Crown race for the biggest and greatest horse of all time: Secretariat at the 1973 Belmont Stakes. Kentucky, Calipari said, was in its own third leg: Louisville, Cleveland and now Indy. The gun sounded, and they watched Secretariat come out of the gate alongside a horse named Sham. Calipari paused it and said, "They stayed with him for a while." He compared it to the first five minutes of a basketball game. When Secretariat headed into the backstretch, he paused it again and said, "It's coming into halftime. Still a ball game."

Cincinnati (in the round of 32) and Notre Dame (in



the Elite Eight) had stayed even with the Wildcats for a time—39 minutes for the Irish. But they lost, just like everyone else. Deeper into the race, Secretariat began to pull away, first by a length, then three, then 20, and finally 31. CBS announcer Chic Anderson famously proclaimed, “He is moving like a tremendous machine!” Calipari told his players they were like Secretariat, and he did not want them to slow down. They were prepared, they were the best, and now they had to go out and take it. “They’re playing for trophies,” he said of the other three teams left in the bracket. “You’re playing for history.”

In truth, there were two tremendous machines in the second national semifinal last Saturday. One was Kentucky’s defense, statistically the stingiest D of college basketball’s modern era: It entered the game allowing an adjusted 85.6 points per 100 possessions. The other was Wisconsin’s offense, which, at an adjusted 127.5 points per 100 possessions, was the greatest scoring attack in the entire era (2002–present) during which kenpom.com has tracked efficiency. Although Calipari did not say this to his team, he confided to his wife, Ellen, before the game, “We could lose. They’re good enough to beat us. I’ll live with it.”

Even though Kentucky shot 60.0% from the field in the first 20 minutes, the score was 36–36 at halftime, and Wisconsin opened the second half on a ruthlessly efficient run—scoring 16 points on their first eight possessions—to take a 52–44 lead. But you knew it was

RED STORM

A dejected Cauley-Stein (15) had to wade through a sea of jubilant Badgers following Kentucky’s semifinal loss.

coming: There would be a time when Kentucky switched into a higher gear and made its move. It happened at just under the 10-minute mark: In a four-minute stretch the score went from 56–52 Wisconsin to 60–56 Kentucky.

But UK’s offense slowed down in the final six minutes. The Badgers crept back into the game, then went up 63–60 on a Sam Dekker three with 1:41 left. With 56.2 seconds to go, Aaron Harrison hit a driving layup—and got fouled by Frank Kaminsky, making the free throw—to cut Wisconsin’s lead to 64–63. But with less than 10 seconds remaining, trailing by four, Harrison hoisted his final three-pointer of the season—and air-balled it, wide left. “I had my chance,” he said. “We just let the game go.”

Wisconsin players leaped into each others’ arms at midcourt as if they’d won the national title. The Wildcats’ locker room, when it opened, was silent. Assistant coach John Robic lamented that the kids were too young to realize the magnitude of what they’d done, even while coming up short. “We had a heck of a run,” Robic said.

Willie Cauley-Stein, the freakishly athletic 7-footer who was the face of Kentucky’s

defense and also its chief locker-room philosopher, tried to come to grips with this team’s legacy. As a junior who’s almost certainly headed to the NBA, he will not have another stab at perfection. He acknowledged the reality that they’d be remembered foremost for coming up short. Back in December, Cauley-Stein confided in a close friend that he felt as if he were living in a movie. Everything was going so right. He wanted it to end with him getting off a bus or a plane, in Lexington, holding a trophy in front of 10,000 fans. “Everything,” Cauley-Stein said, “felt like it was building to a peak.”

It saddened him—deeply—that Wisconsin hijacked the script. Thirty-eight and one was a devastating edit.

Now, Cauley-Stein said, “it’s like a movie when the main character dies. And you’re like, *What?* Why did the main character die? And you’re just super hurt. . . . No cliff-hangers, no nothing. It’s just boom—you’re done.” □



fell behind Notre Dame by 13 points early and couldn't come all the way back, losing 74–64 in the ACC tournament semifinals. Krzyzewski says this was partly because the Fighting Irish were so good, but he also admits his players “assumed we were going to be in the championship game, I think.” As he often tells his players: “Sometimes your biggest opponent is human nature.” The loss in the ACC tournament showed them that one dominant game does not carry over into a tournament setting. As Kentucky found out in the Final Four, neither does a dominant season.

KRZYZEWSKI HAS now won five national championships, breaking a tie with Adolph Rupp for second all time behind John Wooden's 10. He said last week that nobody will ever catch Wooden, but Coach K has his own hard-to-break record. The 24-year gap between his first title in 1991 and the one he clinched on Monday night is the longest for any coach by 11 years. At 68, he has yet to succumb to human nature.

Cynics get nauseated when Krzyzewski talks about leadership and relationships. (His official title is Michael W. Krzyzewski Leadership Head Coach.) But he means what he says, and he starts before players arrive on campus.

Many coaches take a first-come, first-serve approach to recruiting. They offer one scholarship to several players at the same position, and the first one to commit can have it. With rare exceptions Krzyzewski does not do that. For his 2014 recruiting class, he waited on Okafor, Winslow and Jones until they committed in November 2013.

“The guilt trip that sometimes people put these kids through, I don't want that to be the basis of our relationship,” Coach K says. “We didn't recruit some other kids because we wanted to show them: You're the guy we want. I want them to trust me from the very beginning.”

He admits, “It is a dangerous situation at times.” Okafor and Jones, who met at a USA Basketball camp in ninth grade



and quickly became best friends, had been clear they would choose the same school, and assistant coach Jon Scheyer says if they had gone somewhere else, “there was no Plan B.” Okafor's father, Chucky, said he was not sure his son would choose Duke until three or four days before the announcement. But Krzyzewski has decided some players are worth waiting for, even if they may only be on campus for a year.

After winning with upperclassmen for so long, Krzyzewski could have railed against the one-and-done era or simply failed to adapt. So many great coaches who stay in one place fall victim to insularity, and for various reasons Krzyzewski was especially at risk. He coaches at a private school, on Coach K Court, with three assistants (Capel, Scheyer and Nate James) who played for him. He has a senior associate athletic director who handles his personal media obligations, in addition to the team's media-relations director, and he carefully chooses his interviews. Other than postgame sessions, he only meets with local media twice during the regular season.

You find out there are so many things [you didn't know],” says Krzyzewski.
“I'm a much different coach than I was 10 years ago, and I think I'm a better coach.”

Yet Duke's program is now a cauldron of fresh ideas, and Krzyzewski points to his experience coaching the U.S. Olympic team as the reason. That job gives Krzyzewski access to the finest American talent—LeBron James considers him a mentor—and a recruiting pitch nobody else can match: I coach the best players in the world. It's an advantage that virtually every program in the country wishes it had. But the Olympics are also a chance for college's best coach to go back to school.

“I didn't go into it thinking, I'm going to learn,” Krzyzewski says. “You're learning new techniques, new ways of defending, new things on offense, new terminology, new training methods. . . . I'm telling you, it makes you young. You get to your late 50s and 60s, and you find out there are so many things [you didn't know]. I'm a much different coach than I was 10 years ago, and I think I'm a better coach.”

Some older coaches chafe at the analytics favored by the younger generation. But before the 2013–14 season, Duke became one of the first college teams to install high-tech SportVU cameras, which track players by image recognition, in its arena and practice facility. Duke's director of information technology,

Kevin Cullen, says, “Every data point that would be available from an NBA game is available for one of our practices.”

SportVU spits out detailed stats for every player and situation, and while the numbers only reflect games in arenas with SportVU cameras, they are still telling. Duke knows it allowed 0.99 points per possession on ball-screen defense in January and February, but in March that number dropped to 0.81. And entering the Final Four, Cook was making just 18.9% of his three-pointers off the dribble, but 44.6% of his catch-and-shoot threes. The stats persuaded Cook to shoot more off the catch than off the dribble.

HIS SHINING MOMENT

After he nailed the dagger three, Jones (5 and below, far left) soaked it all in with his young team.

And SportVU shows exactly how Winslow’s position switch improved the team beyond his individual numbers. In January and February, Duke averaged 1.0 points per Winslow drive. In March that jumped to 1.2 points.

All these little efficiencies combined to form a broader one: In just a few months, with three freshman starters, the coaching staff figured out its team.

In the first four minutes of last Saturday’s semifinal, Michigan State drilled four straight three-pointers, which is what good players do when nobody is guarding them. Duke coaches had told players all week, “Don’t cheat on the screens!” But the young players kept doing it.

Krzyzewski switched to the 2–3 zone, which jarred the Spartans and settled the Blue Devils. Duke took the lead on a Winslow drive—sure, he missed a layup, but he collapsed the defense and left Okafor a dunk on the rebound with less than 10 minutes remaining in the first half. With 5:11 left the Blue Devils extended the lead to six on a Cook catch-and-shoot three-pointer and went on to blow out Michigan State, 81–61.

That same evening, Wisconsin forced Kentucky into three late shot-clock violations and ended the Wildcats’ season. Faced with a situation his team had so rarely encountered, Kentucky





TOP 10

This season just ended, but it's never too early to start thinking about which teams will be at the top of the polls in the fall

BY SETH DAVIS

coach John Calipari admitted that “the guys got a little bit tentative.” Kentucky freshman guard Devin Booker said he would remember the season for “the ups and downs,” then realized that didn’t quite fit a team that had won its first 38 games. “Mostly ups,” Booker said. He added, “We didn’t plan on losing anytime.” Perhaps they would have been better off if they had.

SIXTY-SEVEN NCAA tournament coaches finished their season with a loss. The only one who did not sat in a room off the Duke locker room afterward, marveling at what had just happened. The Blue Devils had trailed by nine with 13:25 left, but they outscored Wisconsin 29–15 the rest of the way, thanks to a suddenly stout defense that held the Badgers to 6-of-20 shooting down the stretch, and to some long-range heroics by Tyus Jones, who put the Blue Devils ahead for good with a three-pointer with 4:08 left and then put the game out of reach with another that raised Duke’s lead to eight with 1:24 to go. In all the Blue Devils held Wisconsin, the most efficient team in the country with 1.22 points per possession going into the final to 1.03.

Scheyer, James and Capel were there, along with assorted members of the Duke family: some blood relatives, some not. The conversation turned to Duke’s wild second-half lineups.

“I can’t even tell you who we had,” Krzyzewski said. “All I know is I had confidence in all our guys, so what the heck? I would like to say there was some great strategy or something.”

At one point Duke had four freshmen plus Cook on the floor. Nobody could remember that happening all season. But after all the tweaks and lessons of losing, Krzyzewski knew his team could handle the tinkering. So many of the substitutions were made by feel, and often an assistant suggested something and the Hall of Fame coach said, “O.K.” Jefferson for Winslow. Plumlee for Okafor.

Quinn Cook for Bobby Hurley. Justise Winslow for Shane Battier. It all blends together, success bleeding into success, unless you’re in the middle of it and you know just how hard it was.

“It was a magical win,” Krzyzewski said. “It was an unbelievable win. The thing is: These kids really never get the credit that a team [not] coached by me or [a team not] at Duke would get. There are eight guys. Four of them are freshmen! Are you kidding me? But because I’ve coached national championships. . . . We understood it as a staff the whole year. This is like: Holy mackerel! How are they doing all this? But they have.” □



1. VIRGINIA The Cavs lose just one key senior while bringing back an experienced lineup that features 6' 6" swingman Justin Anderson (*left*), a national player of the year candidate.

2. NORTH CAROLINA The Tar Heels dodged a bullet when 6' 8" freshman Justin Jackson decided to stay. Signing high school forwards Brandon Ingram or Jaylen Brown could push UNC to No. 1.

3. KENTUCKY Another elite recruiting class arrives, but the Cats will probably start a lineup light on freshmen, headlined by sophomore guards Tyler Ulis and Devin Booker.

4. KANSAS Unlike in recent years, the Jayhawks have most of their rotation coming back. Look for 6' 8" sophomore guard Sviatoslav Mykhailiuk to make a huge improvement.

5. MARYLAND The Terps got two great pieces of news recently: Sophomore point guard Melo Trimble is coming back, and 6' 10" freshman stud Diamond Stone is signing up.

6. IOWA STATE The Cyclones have four of their top six scorers returning, plus Fred Hoiberg adds his usual batch of transfers led by Deonte Burton, a 6' 4" junior from Marquette.

7. DUKE Jahliel Okafor and Justise Winslow are likely NBA-bound, but if Tyus Jones returns, he'll join two elite freshmen in 6' 10" forward Chase Jeter and 6' 5" guard Luke Kennard.

8. MICHIGAN STATE Senior guard Denzel Valentine, who could be a preseason All-America, will play alongside West Virginia transfer Eron Harris, a 6' 3" junior.

9. INDIANA Freshman Thomas Bryant, a 6' 10" power forward from Rochester, N.Y., will fill the interior void and allow the Big Ten's best perimeter corps to flourish.

10. OKLAHOMA If 6' 4" guard Buddy Hield, the Big 12's player of the year, returns for his senior season, the Sooners will again challenge for the conference crown.

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Ga

The top player in the class of 2016, Missouri high school star Jayson Tatum could play for any college in the nation. But the draw of his family—not to mention a certain variety of pizza—could lead him to stay in the city that he loves

BY JOAN NIESEN

Photographs by
David E. Klutho
For Sports Illustrated

Home



MARCH 14 was one of those almost-spring Missouri mornings that flirts with warm, and two lines, each 100 people long, snaked through the parking lot. It was an hour and a half before tip-off at Linden-

wood University in St. Charles, and the queue wasn't moving yet. Each time the sun slinked behind a cloud, two teenage boys shivered, clutching their arms to their chests. But they wouldn't dare budge.

"Have you seen his girlfriend?" one asks the other. "Do you know what kind of car he drives?" No detail of Jayson Tatum's life is too mundane to ponder. He is the reason they—and everyone else—are here. His Twitter account, @Im_that_dude22 has more than 13,000 followers. A highlight clip from his sophomore season has been viewed 40,000 times, and when he made his official visit to Duke in early March, the Cameron Crazies chanted his name. Jayson is the best high school basketball player in the class of 2016, and some analysts say he is the most talented player to come out of Missouri. (Other notable hoopsters to emerge from the Show Me State include Naismith Hall of Famers Ed Macauley and Bill Bradley, as well as current NBA players Tyler Hansbrough and David Lee.) Today his team—Chaminade College Prep, an all-boys' school from suburban St. Louis—is playing in a state quarterfinal game.

Then Jayson arrives, unfolding his 6' 9" (and still growing) frame as he steps off Chaminade's bus. At just 200 pounds, he's downright skinny, and though his legs are solid, his spindly arms are reminiscent of a young Kevin Durant. His play, too, draws comparisons to the Thunder forward's. On this afternoon, the show he puts

on will be worth the chilly wait. Although his 18 points in three quarters don't come close to his season averages—26.1 points, 10.7 rebounds and 3.4 assists—he shows the flashes of dominance that leave college coaches starry-eyed. A combo guard, Jayson is known—and sometimes chided—for his selflessness, and there are still moments in Chaminade's 70–47 victory when he has an open shot but defers. On several drives, though, he's unstoppable, pushing the ball up the court, shedding his defender and dropping in a perfect step-back jumper.

A week later Jayson's high school off-season will begin two days too soon, when Chaminade loses in the state semifinals, but he has USA Basketball activities to attend, AAU ball to play—and a college to pick. He has narrowed his list to 10—Arizona, Connecticut, Duke, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Saint Louis and Wake Forest—and he'll soon cut that number in half, with the goal of committing before November. Tar Heels coach Roy Williams has attended several of his games,



and the Blue Devils' Mike Krzyzewski has called him a "special player." The biggest names in basketball want Jayson in their uniforms, and the pull to go to an elite program is strong. But to spend even a few minutes at one of Jayson's games is to realize: St. Louis is tugging back just as hard.

JAYSON'S FATHER, Justin, was a basketball star at Christian Brothers College High (CBC) in St. Louis. He played at Saint Louis University, as did his best friend from high school, Larry Hughes, who was selected eighth by the 76ers in the 1998 NBA draft. Jayson's mother, Brandy Cole, had just graduated from University City High when she learned she was pregnant, and she and Justin had already broken up. Passing up volleyball and academic scholarship offers at Tennessee, among other schools, Cole opted for an affordable education at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, putting her savings toward day care and car insurance.

When Jayson was born on March 3, 1998, SLU was preparing to play in the NCAA tournament. Cole had sole responsibility for Jayson in his early years, which is why her little boy's first memories of basketball are not of watching his father's games, but of playing some aquatic pickup ball himself. "We had a suction cup basketball hoop on the wall [of the tub], and I would shoot for hours," Jayson says. "I think I was pretty good at that."

Bathtub hoops gave way to YMCA ball and eventually to pickup games with Hughes and Justin, who played in the Netherlands for about two years after leaving St. Louis. He returned to the U.S. in 2006 and coached his son in AAU until Jayson was 14. As Jayson grew, Justin made sure his son developed ballhandling and perimeter skills, and by the summer before Jayson entered high school, he was considered one of the country's top eighth-graders.

He was also at the perfect school; Chaminade has produced Bradley Beal, a longtime family friend who now plays with the Wizards, as well as Warriors forward David Lee. But in 2013, Justin got the coaching job at his alma mater. He had dreamed of coaching his boy at CBC, but transferring schools would have meant sitting out a year, and so father and son became rivals. (Jayson's team has won three out of the four games the two schools have played.) Still, Justin hopes to see Jayson play at his college alma mater.

IMO'S PIZZA, a variety unique to St. Louis, has a cracker-thin crust, and its provol cheese clings to the roof of the mouth. It's polarizing. Outsiders find it revolting. It's like eating cardboard, they say. But if you're from St. Louis, you'd sell your pinkie for a piece.

Jayson loves Imo's. When he returns home after a trip—he's been to Uruguay and Dubai with USA Basketball teams—it's the first thing

Jayson Tatum

Three years ago
Jayson was an
eighth-grader, and
three years from now
he'll most likely be in
the NBA. When told
this, his eyes pop.



he eats. When he's in town, it's on his plate three times a week. Asked about the benefits of staying in Missouri for college, Imo's—and his dog, Lennox—top Jayson's list. He just loves St. Louis as much as its pizza, and when he dreams of his first NBA paycheck, he imagines buying Cole a house—albeit with a catch. He's lived in the same home in University City since he was two, and he doesn't want to go anywhere else. He'll knock the house down, he says, and cram something bigger onto the lot. Cole, now a lawyer, laughs. "That's not how property value works," she tells her son. Jayson has grown accustomed to certain things:

COURTESY OF BRANDY COLE (LEFT)



the house, the pizza, his family at each of his games. Before Chaminade's quarterfinal win, his grandmother Kristie Jursch was one of the first in the building, staking out a section of bleachers for her party of 30. Aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents—none would miss even one of Jayson's games, and most sport a red-and-black T-shirt that Cole has had made. Jayson has come to expect the crowd, his mother's hollering, his father's eyes following him on the court, dissecting every possession. That's basketball. That's home.

Jayson has heard for years the tales of Justin's and Hughes's era at SLU, when record crowds filled

UPPER HAND

A two-time state player of the year at Chaminade, Jayson has won three of four matchups against his father, Justin (in purple), coach at Christian Brothers College High.

the Scottrade Center in Billiken blue. Both Justin and Hughes were initially headed out of state, but when Hughes's brother's heart condition worsened, they committed to the Billikens and to Spoonball, as former SLU coach Charlie Spoonhour's style of play was termed.

Justin knows, though, that SLU no longer has that certain hoops cachet, and that his son's USA Basketball friends wouldn't understand the appeal of Saint Louis. But if Jayson were to sign with a Missouri school, Justin says, it would become a destination. "Be a trendsetter," Justin says. "You don't have to go on this road because it was made for Shane Battier or Grant Hill. You can do what they did—at home."

Hughes, too, endorses SLU. Just as he does with his critiques of Jayson's game, he filters his opinions through Justin. Hughes, who runs a fitness club in Atlanta, remembers how many voices were in his ear when he was 17. He doesn't want to distract, but he makes his feelings known to Jayson. "I always preach home," Hughes says.

But home has its drawbacks. Missouri and SLU went a combined 20–44 in 2014–15. Kim Anderson, formerly of D-II Central Missouri, is the Tigers' third coach in five years, and SLU, under Jim Crews, who took over for Rick Majerus in 2012, lost to Duquesne in the first round of the Atlantic 10 tournament. Plus, neither has been as committed to recruiting Jayson as Justin would like. When out-of-state coaches are in the stands and Anderson and Crews are missing, Jayson notices. Still, Justin and Cole tell their son to go where he's comfortable. Corey Tate, Jayson's AAU coach and a former SLU guard, has a feeling that the teenager will make an unconventional choice and shock the basketball world.

AFTER CHAMINADE'S quarterfinal win, Jayson is slow to leave the locker room and make his way up the bleachers. He has his baby half sister, Kayden, to bounce and his dad to greet. Jursch intercepts him for congratulations, and there are aunts and great-aunts, grandparents, cousins and friends to high-five. There are autographs to sign, too, which Jayson does willingly, and he smiles wide for photos with strangers. He handles the requests with grace, making it easy to forget that he's just a kid who gets to school at 6:30 a.m. to shoot hoops, who has a math tutor after the final bell rings, whose baby sister wants a hug.

Three years ago Jayson was an eighth-grader, and three years from now he'll most likely be in the NBA. When told this, his eyes pop. He remembers the advice Beal has given him: "[It's] tempting to look too far ahead," Beal says. "None of us knows what our future holds. You have to enjoy the moment."

At this moment, Cole is hollering the address of a barbecue joint near Chaminade's game, and Jayson's girlfriend, Toriah Lachell, is showing off a picture of her prom dress. Hoping the autographs are over, Jayson walks Toriah to her car at the back of the lot. The two duck between vehicles, and Jayson hugs Toriah against the trunk of her car. They stand still, normal teenagers for a few moments. □

NHL

The Last



BY JACK DICKEY

Photograph by
Brad Penner USA TODAY Sports

Waltz

The Islanders are a joke no longer—but their best season in three decades is also their final one in the suburbs. Can hockey's most provincial franchise win another Stanley Cup before it flees for Brooklyn?



ONE OF the top teams in the Eastern Conference has spent the better part of the last 30 years as a laughing-stock. The Islanders' futility has come in phases, with a slow decline followed by mediocrity, followed by calamitous mediocrity, followed by funny calamitous mediocrity, followed by rebirth.

Since New York reached the conference finals in 1993, the team has bought out a combined 12 years of the contracts of both captain Alexei Yashin and former No. 1 draft pick Rick DiPietro and, in a series of ruinous trades, sent away goalie Roberto Luongo, defenseman Zdeno Chara and the draft pick that would become center Jason Spezza. It has been purchased by not one but two men who eventually

went to prison for financial felonies. It briefly replaced the Long Island crest on its sweaters with a monstrosity that bore an uncanny resemblance to the Gorton's fisherman. It cycled through eight coaches while leaving "Mad" Mike Milbury—the general manager who not only traded Luongo and Chara but who also signed Yashin to his budget-busting deal—in charge for 11 years. The Islanders finally replaced Milbury in 2006 with Neil Smith, the architect of the 1994 Rangers' Cup-winning team, only to fire him 42 days later. His replacement was Garth Snow, the team's backup goalie.

But the Islanders are not the joke that the last three decades of their history suggest. The franchise holds the record for most consecutive playoff series wins (19), and their four Stanley Cups (won from 1980 to '83) in 41 seasons look a lot better than the rival Rangers' four in 87. Winger Mike Bossy may have been the best pure scorer ever (his 0.76 goals per game is tops in NHL history), and a host of his teammates on those Cup-winning teams deservedly sit alongside

him in the Hall of Fame. Current captain John Tavares hasn't fallen meaningfully shy of a point-per-game scoring pace since his sophomore season in 2010–11, when the center was all of 20 years old.

And that backup goalie turned front-office exec? Garth Snow is a good bet for General Manager of the Year. He snapped up the rights to goalie Jaroslav Halak in May 2014 and then signed him before free agency began, and stole a top-flight first pairing—defensemen Johnny Boychuk and Nick Leddy—from two cap-pressed teams just before the season opened. Says center Frans Nielsen, "Right away [those moves] gave us the feeling that we shouldn't be scared of anyone—they should be afraid of us." It's more than a feeling now: With three games left, the Isles had 98 points, their highest season total since 1984. It's been at least that long since Long Island was this excited about the playoffs.

Nothing sums up the duality of the franchise better than the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, the Islanders' home from their inception in 1972 until whenever their playoff run ends this year—a 16,170-seat sculpture that involuntarily contrasts New York's big-time past with its small-time present. Bronze plaques of the Islanders' greatest players line the hallway from the dressing room to the ice surface, but look up and the drop ceiling is cheap gypsum. The home locker room must be the only one in the NHL that relies on two overworked ceiling fans for ventilation. DiPietro, an analyst for MSG Network, says he can't count how many times he used a blowtorch—meant for curving the blades of hockey sticks—to chase cockroaches out of the room. The dingy facility may have spooked potential free agents, but it also built an us-against-the-world mentality for the men who called themselves Islanders.

And like those cockroaches, the Islanders can survive anything. New York will keep its name and tradition when it moves in the fall. But before it decamps for Brooklyn—just 25 miles west but in a different world entirely—it's worth pausing to examine the unique little place the Islanders are leaving behind, a window into America's recent past.

REVIVAL LEADER

Tavares, who ranks second in the league in scoring, is the heartbeat of the NHL's fourth-best offense.



**JUNE 10,
1973**

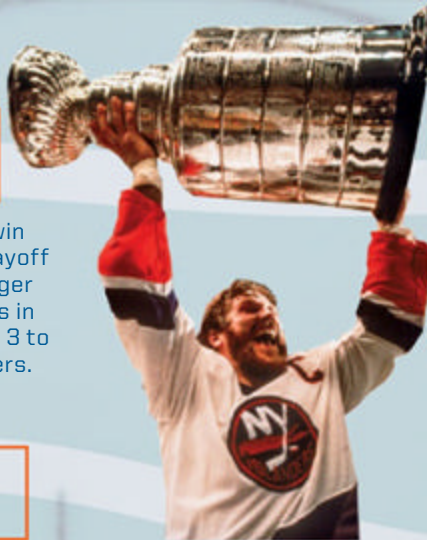
After winning 12 games in its inaugural season, New York hires former Blues coach Al Arbour (left).

**APRIL 11,
1975**

The Islanders win their very first playoff series when winger J.P. Parise scores in overtime of Game 3 to upset the Rangers.

**MAY 24,
1980**

New York wins the Stanley Cup in its first trip to the finals, defeating the Flyers in six games.



**JULY 6,
1997**



Less than a year after John Spano (above) agreed to buy the Islanders—then in the midst of a seven-season playoff drought—for \$165 million, *Newsday* exposes him as a fraud, showing that he has nowhere near the amount of money he claims. In 2000, Spano was sentenced to 71 months in prison for bank fraud.

**OCT. 12,
1972**

Eleven months after the NHL awarded the franchise to clothes maker Roy Boe, the Islanders win their first game, defeating the Kings 3-2 at Nassau Coliseum.

**SEPT. 13,
2006**

New York signs goalie Rick DiPietro to a 15-year, \$67.5 million contract. Often injured, he plays 175 more games the next seven seasons before retiring.

**JUNE 26,
2009**

With the top pick in the draft, the Islanders select current captain John Tavares.

**OCT. 24,
2012**

A year after Nassau County voters shot down a referendum on a new arena, New York announces that it will move to Brooklyn's Barclays Center for the '15-16 season.



SUBURB IS an ugly word, so unsightly, so *u*-heavy, that it reads Germanic despite its Latin roots. It looks like a first cousin of *burp*. The word has spent much of its life as a pejorative. Lewis Mumford, the noted urban planner, wrote in 1922 that in the suburbs, “life is carried on without the discipline of rural occupations and without the cultural resources that the Central District of the city still retains.” He wrote that long before the suburbs—including Nassau County’s Levittown—had completed the bulk of their 20th-century growth.

In the popular imagination, cities are edgy and enriching. The suburbs have been portrayed by everyone from Cheever to Eminem as suppressive and draining, home to hypocrisy and pricey sameness. But there was a time and a place—post-World War II, on Long Island—when the perceived

dichotomy didn’t hold. New York City was overcrowded, dirty and a bad environment for the families that GIs and their wives planned to raise. The suburbs would be clean and prosperous. Long Island, to that point known for farms and the summer estates of the wealthy, would be ideal for the middle class.

Understandably few major league franchises have ever affiliated themselves with suburbs, regardless of where their stadiums and fans may reside. The Dallas Cowboys play in Arlington; the Washington Redskins play in Landover, Md. The Atlanta Braves are moving to Cobb County but won’t be changing their name. The California Angels urbanized into the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. So too did the Florida (now Miami) Marlins.

Only the Islanders have been loud and proud about their suburban status. The team came to be after Nas-

sau County decided it would rather have an NHL franchise playing in its new arena than one that hailed from the upstart WHA. (The poor New York Raiders ended up instead at Madison Square Garden.) Naming a team for your suburb was the silent-majority thing to do—Nassau County had gone for Nixon in 1968. Better still to put that team in a building named to honor veterans.

In 2004, with the Coliseum aging, New York owner Charles Wang came up with the Lighthouse Project, the first major attempt to replace the building. All parties involved thought they had cooked up a real winner—the county would give Wang and a developer partner the land on which the Coliseum is built. Wang, who claimed to lose millions each year from keeping the Islanders afloat in a bad arena, would get something of a windfall for his trouble. The county, meanwhile,

DENIS BRODEUR/NHL/GETTY IMAGES; (ARBURR); JOHN GIANUNDO/GETTY IMAGES; (SPANIO); BRUCE BENNETT STUDIOS/GETTY IMAGES; (CUP); DAVE SANDORF/GETTY IMAGES; (ZAMBONI); FRED VUICH FOR SPORTS ILLUSTRATED; (BACKGROUND)

MAY 19,
1984

After hoisting four straight Cups, the Isles lose in the finals to the Oilers, their first playoff series loss since '79.

OCT. 7,
1995

The team debuts the ill-fated "fish sticks" jerseys depicting a stick-wielding fisherman who bears a striking resemblance to the logo for Gorton's Seafood.



Suburban Slide

could arrange for a more lucrative lease with the promise of attracting a young, skilled tax base. Renderings suggested a modern, downscaled cityscape, with apartments and office space, a luxury hotel, restaurants, shops and a minor league ballpark. But the suburbs put their foot down; citing concerns over traffic and public utilities, the town of Hempstead insisted that Wang dramatically scale down his project before it would give zoning approval. He said no and walked away.

For all that the Long Island suburbs had once symbolized about postwar America—the ability to create something meaningful where there once had been nothing—they now stood for intractability. The citizens who owed their neighborhoods to the ambitious developers of the mid-20th century had no use for the planners of the 21st. The ugly word looks a lot like *stubborn*, too.

ONE YEAR after a referendum to fund a new arena had been rejected by Nassau County voters, the team in 2012 officially left the suburbs behind, announcing in the midst of the NHL lockout that it would move to the Barclays Center in Brooklyn once its Coliseum lease ended. Wang later agreed to sell the team to two investors. Although Barclays doesn't have quite the right layout for hockey (its small floor means that one goal will have essentially no lower-bowl seats behind it, and the arena will have fewer than 16,000 total seats), it does have 112 luxury suites and spacious roach-free locker rooms.

This year New York finally seems worthy of first-class digs—and capable of a long playoff run. Struggling with injuries, the Islanders went 4-6-3 in March. But led by Tavares, who's second in the NHL with 80 points (35 goals, 45 assists), they are still the fourth-highest-scoring team in the league (2.96 goals per game). New York is potent, and it is deep: Six forwards have scored at least 15 goals, tied for second most in the NHL. "You could see the talent in the room [from Day One]," says Tavares. "Jaro, a goalie in the prime of his career; [forwards Mikhail] Grabovski and [Nikolay] Kulemin—that made us feel good about up front. We had a lot of kids on the back end, then brought in Leddy and Boychuck—they're winners."

As for next season, Barclays Center CEO Brett Yormark says that his sales pitch has been two-pronged. (Barclays Center, not the Islanders, has been handling the sales

and marketing of the team, which has yet to announce whether its employees will be offered jobs at Barclays.) To Brooklyn fans, he talks up the speed of the game and borough pride. On Long Island his slogan is, Tradition has a new home. Yormark says that he has become acutely aware of how much Islanders fans value their traditions. He says more season-ticket holders have agreed to come to Brooklyn than he expected—Barclays anticipates that between 20% and 30% of next year's attendees will be from Long Island. And the Long Island Rail Road, as he will gladly remind you, stops right across from the Islanders' new home.

But many fans won't come, and so this season of unexpected success has been bittersweet. Perhaps the Islanders, who have not won a playoff series since 1993, can win one more in "Fort Neverlose"—perhaps their depth, and their occasionally brilliant netminder, can take them even further. Jokes DiPietro, "If they play the Rangers in the second round, they won't even need to knock down the Coliseum. It'll be in ruins either way."

The new building carries no guarantee of financial success. In 2007 the Devils moved from the isolated Meadowlands into Newark's gleaming Prudential Center, a site easily accessible by public transit, but they've never ranked better than 20th in the league in attendance in the years since. (This season New Jersey is 26th.) Still, the NHL probably doesn't mind having a new arena in its ranks, and the space will help the Isles entice free agents.

As for sharing it with the NBA's Brooklyn Nets? Funny enough, the first game at Nassau Coliseum was a Nets game, too. On Feb. 11, 1972, the ABA's New York Nets, who had been playing in Commack and later in West Hempstead, beat the Pittsburgh Condors 129-121. As *Newsday* put it the next day, COLISEUM DEBUT IS A SMASH HIT. The Nets were gone in five years, sure. But today? The Brooklyn future looks bright for the Islanders, almost as bright as their future looked when the Coliseum opened in '72, just as bright as the twinkle in the eye of developer William Levitt when he appeared in '50 on the cover of *TIME*, surrounded by Long Island homes, along with the headline FOR SALE: A NEW WAY OF LIFE. □

NET BENEFIT

Halak (41) has stabilized New York's goaltending. He ranks fifth in the league in wins, with 37.





N

WE PLAY B



Handcrafted for
Mike Napoli

AP TIME

IN AN ERA OF
PARITY, PLAYERS AND
TEAMS ARE LOOKING
FOR ANYTHING THAT
WILL GIVE THEM AN
ADVANTAGE—STARTING
WITH ONE OF THE
MOST BASIC (AND
MYSTERIOUS) OF ALL
HUMAN NEEDS

BY MATT MCCARTHY

Illustration by
SI Premedia

• DESPERATE MEASURES

Getting better sleep was so important to the Red Sox' Napoli that he had doctors take a power saw to his face.



ON THE NIGHT of last Nov. 14, Mike Napoli found himself speeding through a major city on old-fashioned roller skates, wearing tiny jean shorts, a tight white T-shirt and a Walkman attached to large, outdated headphones. "I was weaving around cars, and I remember going by a hotel," says the Red Sox' first baseman. "I could see that there was an NBA team checking in, and then, next thing I knew, I was in a mall, doing flips, twirling around."

To Boston fans familiar with Napoli's adventures in celebrating around the city after the 2013 World Series, that scene might not sound so surreal. But it was actually Napoli's first dream in a decade, at least the first that he remembers, and he has a Harvard physician named Leonard Kaban to thank for the experience. Ten days earlier Dr. Kaban, Chief of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital, had used a small power saw to cut and then reconfigure Napoli's chin, jaw and sinuses in a seven-hour procedure called maxillomandibular advancement. The goal was to allow the 33-year-old slugger, who had suffered from severe sleep apnea since his early 20s, to breathe more easily at night. "I used to wake up 50 or a hundred times a night," Napoli says. "Now I'm actually sleeping. I'm not tired all the time."

In the scientific quest to maximize athletic performance, as teams scrape for every win, Napoli is on the frontier of a burgeoning area of study: sleep. A number of major league teams, including the Giants, Rays, Rockies, Pirates and Indians, have consulted sleep experts in an attempt to fight fatigue and to exploit the so-called "circadian advantage." The man who coined that term, Dr. Christopher Winter, Medical Director of Charlottesville Neurology and Sleep Medicine in Virginia, was the lead author of a large 2009 study that examined how time-zone changes affect outcomes in major league baseball. His group recorded how frequently each team crossed a time zone over 10 seasons and discovered that if a team has to cross a time zone to play a game, it is at a slight disadvantage over and above a visiting team that does not deal with a time change; a team that crosses three time zones has just a 40% chance of victory. Winter, who is board certified in both neurology and sleep medicine, attributes this to

•
FINDING
AN EDGE

a disruption in circadian rhythms—the body’s sleep/wake cycle, which is synchronized to cues in the environment like light and temperature as well as the hormone melatonin.

Perhaps no team feels this more acutely than the Rockies, one of only two teams in the Mountain time zone. Says outfielder Michael Cuddyer, who joined the Mets this winter after three seasons with Colorado, “Every time you got on a plane, you were switching time zones . . . you never felt like you were on the same clock.”



•
BREATHE
EASY

The season will be the real test, but after surgery Napoli hit .400/.467/.875 in 17 spring games.

To combat the circadian disruption, Cuddyer attempted to trick his body’s internal clock: “No matter where I was, 9 a.m. was 9 a.m. If I’m on the East Coast, and I’m used to getting up in Denver at nine, well now I’ve got to get up at 11. But it was hard. I don’t know if it worked or not.”

The Rockies are aware of their circadian disadvantage and try to minimize it by carefully selecting travel days. “If we had a home game, and then an off-day, and then a road city,” Cuddyer says, “we would travel after that home game and spend the whole off-day in the road city. Most teams would leave on the off-day.” Greg Feasal, Executive VP and Chief Operating Officer of the Rockies, says their consultation with sleep experts prompted the club to push back Sunday home games to 2 p.m. to give players more rest. Cuddyer says this arrangement helped, but he, like many players, was often dragging by midseason.

“Our research shows that sleepy players don’t tend to stay in major league baseball as long as well-rested players,” Dr. Winter says. “You need sleep to do all kinds of things: to produce growth

hormone, to fight off infections and to heal.” Winter works with a number of teams, including the Giants, who consulted him during last year’s World Series. After San Francisco lost Game 2 in Kansas City, the team took his advice and did something it had rarely done before: stayed the night in Missouri instead of catching a late flight home. The next afternoon the team flew back to San Francisco; a week later they were Series champions.

“I was really surprised by how little education was flowing around these clubs,” Dr. Winter says. “There was a lot of bad information out there.” In the past, teams have paid thousands of dollars for 20-minute PowerPoint presentations and players were advised to use unusual, unproven sleep aids like magnetic bracelets or oxygen chambers. “Organizations were scammed,” he says, “but sleep medicine is not a scam. It’s about what sleep can do for you and what it can’t.”

WE DON’T REALLY know why humans need sleep. From an evolutionary perspective, it doesn’t make much sense: The unconscious state leaves us vulnerable, and sleep does nothing to replenish or propagate the species. But without it, we fall apart.

Sleep deprivation affects a baseball player—or any athlete—in a variety of ways, impairing reflexes, motivation, judgment, healing and attention. Chronic sleep deprivation can slow reaction times nearly tenfold, which is devastating for a hitter who has just .25 seconds to decide whether to swing at a Major League fastball. Dr. Scott Kutscher, a neurologist and sleep expert at Vanderbilt, has studied plate discipline—as measured by a hitter’s tendency to swing at pitches outside of the strike zone—and argues that for many players, it becomes progressively worse over the course of a season. He believes this has to do with fatigue, which impairs judgment.

Kutscher and Winter are among the first generation of physicians investigating the impact of sleep deprivation on ballplayers, and their work reveals that there’s not a one-size-fits-all solution for athletes. “It’s more about understanding a player’s physiology,” Dr. Kutscher says. “Different people sleep differently.” Experts can explain basic sleep hygiene to players, determine who is sleep deprived and identify a player with a sleep disorder that needs fixing. (Both Winter and Kutscher declined to discuss the specifics of the services they provide for professional baseball teams.) Interestingly, certain bodily functions may remain relatively impervious

to fatigue. Some studies have found that muscle strength is not compromised by sleep deprivation. Things like the clean and jerk, squats and the 40-meter dash—tasks requiring short-term, high-power output—are largely unaffected by one or several nights of sleep loss. That's presumably why an exhausted Napoli could regularly hit a baseball 400 feet when he made good contact. Will better sleep help him do that more often? That's the hope for the Red Sox, for whom a couple of wins could make all the difference this season.



LAST FALL, NAPOLI was referred to Dr. Kaban because he was suffering from obstructive sleep apnea—his jaw muscles relaxed during sleep and the lower jaw and tongue fell back, causing his upper airway to collapse. He had all of the classic symptoms of a patient with a severe form of the disease: Constant fatigue, loud snoring, lack of dreams and apneic episodes—frequent moments when he'd simply stop breathing at night.

Obstructive sleep apnea places people at a high-

VISION

SEEING IS BELIEVING

NOT LONG AFTER the Rays asked him to play the video game in 2013, shortstop Cole Figueroa became focused on winning it. The idea was to identify

as early as possible whether the seams were visible on a spinning baseball, and to hit a laptop key if they were. So Figueroa figured out how to cheat: He camped above the space bar, hitting it every time a ball appeared on-screen, seams or no.

He was wrong about half the time, but the points he gained from quick reactions outweighed the points lost. "I'm really competitive," he says. When the next update of the program, called Neuroscouting, came out about a month later, the designers had added code to prevent guessing. "They were like, We get what you're doing and we don't like it," Figueroa, now a Yankees minor leaguer, says with a laugh.

Teams across baseball are working with companies like Neuroscouting to introduce vision and reaction-time programs into their evaluation and training processes. Ophthalmology in MLB has evolved: Teams who once shunned prospects who wore glasses now use EEGs to track what hitters see and when.

"Hitters have three tenths of a second on a 90-mph pitch to make a decision," says Keith Smithson, the Nationals' team optometrist. "If we can buy a tenth in there somewhere, we gain the ability to foul it off if we we're gonna miss it or put it in play if we were gonna foul it off." Smithson uses a three-tiered approach to eye care: He tests and corrects visual acuity (the average major leaguer has 20-12½ vision); trains the seven muscles around the eye to



• LOOK ALIVE

Dr. Smithson (left, with utilityman Steve Lombardozzi) works to boost the Nationals' visual reflexes.

focus through drills, both high and low tech; and tries to improve visual processing, the

communication between the eyes and the brain.

Yankees outfielder Carlos Beltran famously loved the ocular-enhancer machine—a device that shoots numbered and colored tennis balls at up to 150 mph while hitters try to identify them—so much that he wrote it into his 2005 contract with the Mets. That machine is still in use around baseball, as is one of its descendants, a light track, which is like a landing strip that simulates pitches at varying velocities and timings. Hitters stand 10 feet away, beneath an infrared sensor, and try to swing at the correct moment.

Those drills, and computer programs like the web-based platform Vizual Edge, help hone the focus of the eye. But the biggest advances recently have come from visual processing, or linking sight to motion, which is improved by increasingly advanced programs like the game Figueroa played.

Of course, not everything has a scientific basis. Some players use a Japanese brand of eye drops that has no effect other than to make their eyes sting, feeling it wakes them up. "Some of it, you just do because you do," says Smithson. "As long as they're not getting hurt, we let them keep doing it." —Stephanie Apstein

er risk for all kinds of other diseases, including diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, arrhythmias and stroke. Patients with severe, untreated obstructive sleep apnea—the kind Napoli was living with—have a two- to threefold higher risk of premature death than those without the condition.

“It started a long time ago,” says Napoli, who began his big league career with the Angels in 2006 before being traded to the Rangers in ’11. “I was still playing with the Angels and my mom came to visit me. I remember her saying, ‘You’ve got some really

weird sleeping patterns. You need to get it checked out.’ But I was young, and I didn’t do anything.”

Because he ignored the problem, Napoli has spent much of his career feeling perpetually exhausted. “When I played in Texas,” he says, “I was always tired. It got to the point where I would come out of games dizzy. I thought it was my blood sugar, and I tried to play through it.” The unrelenting big league schedule—162 games in approximately 180 days—only exacerbated Napoli’s symptoms. He often woke up in hotel rooms short of breath and disoriented. “I wouldn’t know where I was,” he says. “I’d stop breathing and wake up and realize I was hallucinating.”

Despite his chronic fatigue, Napoli, who signed with Boston before the 2013 season, hit 186 home runs over his first nine seasons; he only got tested for a sleep disorder because he repeatedly nodded off while driving. Napoli was diagnosed with severe obstructive sleep apnea—a condition that affects millions of Americans—and prescribed a host of treatments, including breathing machines, anti-anxiety medication and mouth guards. None of them worked.

When Napoli joined the Red Sox, a room inside Fenway Park was set aside for him to rest before games. “I usually took naps during batting practice,” Napoli says, “because I was so tired every single day.” Shortly after the 2014 season, he decided to do something drastic.

“We made an incision in Mike’s gums above the teeth,” Dr. Kaban says of the Nov. 4 operation. (Napoli gave his surgeon permission to speak about his medical condition.)

“We dissected away the soft tissue to expose the upper jaw,” Kaban continues, “then we used what’s actually a rather delicate power saw to cut his upper jaw horizontally above the teeth and above the floor of the nose and sinuses.” Once that incision was complete, Napoli’s upper jaw was free from the skull base, and it was pushed forward about 12 millimeters and

NUTRITION

YOU HIT WHAT YOU EAT

W

HEN ROBERTA ANDING got to work on a hot Florida day in early March, she tested a new smoothie: spinach and kale with ginger. A coworker walked by and grimaced. “Just try it,” she said. He did and, shocked that he liked it, asked for the recipe.

It was a good start to the morning for Anding: She’s the Astros’ nutritionist. “It’s never good nutrition if your guys won’t eat it,” she says.

Although it’s difficult to quantify the effects of healthy eating on a baseball career, a majority of teams are now convinced it’s worth the effort. In 2011 the Pirates replaced outdated facilities (think Foreman grills) at PNC Park with a \$250,000 “performance kitchen.” Midway through the ’13 season the Orioles switched from catered food to a team chef recommended by second baseman Brian Roberts. “Every place is different,” says Astros reliever Pat Neshek (*right*). “You get Oakland, who throws out the cheapest food—it wouldn’t even register on an A-ball level—and then the Cardinals, who were incredible.”

The minors can be especially tough: Players make less than \$2,200 per month, and a good day on the road is a rest stop with both a McDonald’s and a Taco Bell. But given that teams put over \$300 million into signing their draft picks and amateur free agents every year, it’s an investment worth protecting. “That’s why you see more teams buying their affiliate clubs,” says Jake Beiting, the Astros’ strength and conditioning coach. “You have dueling interests a lot of time with profit margins.” Historically the pre- and postgame minor league spreads come from clubhouse dues; Houston has started supplementing their minor league food budgets.

Even in the majors, road trips can be tough. The Cardinals’ chef, Simon Lusky, prepares frozen meals to send along with the players. Sometimes the Nationals wish head chef Faisal Sultani did too. “When we get home,” says first baseman Ryan Zimmerman, “everybody is like, Oh, my God, it’s so good to see you.”

—S.A.



stabilized with bone plates and screws. Kaban and his team then went to work on Napoli's lower jaw, making an incision behind the molars. "We split it like a log," Kaban says, "and we slid the lower jaw forward about 12 millimeters." The procedure nearly doubled the size of Napoli's cramped airway.

Napoli spent the first night after the surgery in the Mass General intensive care unit. He went home a few days later with strict instructions not to eat or exercise. "It wasn't easy," Napoli says of the post-op experience. "I'm laying around my house, icing my face, taking pain meds. I couldn't eat—I went on liquid diet for six weeks. I lost 15 pounds." But after a few weeks he noticed that he was sleeping better, getting between seven and eight hours per night, and actually felt refreshed when he woke up in the morning. And of course he was starting to have evocative night visions. "The dreams were weird," he says. "Really weird."

This season batting practice might actually be a time for Napoli to swing, not sleep. Based on Dr. Kutscher's research, Napoli can expect to have better concentration, mood and reaction time with fewer headaches.

"I'm having another sleep study in a few weeks," Napoli says, "so the doctors can see exactly how well I'm sleeping." According to Dr. Kaban, approximately 90% of patients who have undergone maxillomandibular advancement report an improvement in sleep. But fewer of them—somewhere around 75%—actually score better several months after surgery during a formal sleep study (known as a polysomnogram). There is little consensus in the medical community regarding the role of facial surgery in patients with obstructive sleep apnea; surgical therapy is generally reserved for the most severe cases, and success isn't known until months after the operation.

Still, thus far it's hard to doubt that Mike Napoli is achieving a deeper form of sleep. That's why he's having such vivid dreams. His body is finally able to enter rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, which was previously impossible. He kept waking up before he could get there.

"He's worked hard this off-season," Dr. Kaban says, "and he's been through a lot. I hope Mike hits 30 home runs this year and drives in a hundred runs. And I hope he gets another World Series ring." If Napoli does put up those numbers and gets another ring, his surgeon might deserve one too. □

Matt McCarthy is the author of the new book The Real Doctor Will See You Shortly.



Judge: Milton Bradley dehumanized
Monique Bradley

lost oxygen to the
brain while getting
choked out

EXCLUSIVE

This Is What Domestic Abuse Looks Like

BY MICHAEL MCKNIGHT
WITH L. JON WERTHEIM

In the spring of 2003, **Milton Bradley**, a switch-hitting outfielder for the Indians, met his future wife, Monique Williams, a community relations intern with the team. He was about to turn 25. She was 22.

Over the next decade—while the erratic, belligerent Bradley was given a pass by many MLB teams, media members and the sports culture at large—he and Williams would be locked in a cycle of emotional and physical abuse, separation and reconciliation, police intervention and court conflict.

The Ray Rice elevator video, shocking as it was, captured only one moment. But a trove of public records shows the tragic extent of the Bradleys' violent relationship.

MILTON AND MONIQUE BRADLEY



MILTON BRADLEY: I was out in centerfield shagging fly balls. . . . I saw a female walking down . . . to the field, and I [asked] one of my teammates, “Who’s that?” He said, “I don’t know.” I said, “Well . . . I’m about to find out.” And I ran in. . . .

HARLAND BRAUN (Bradley’s attorney): Let me . . . jump ahead. Did you ever hit Monique?

BRADLEY: Never.

BRAUN: You’ve yelled at her, correct?

BRADLEY: I’ve yelled at a lot of people.⁵

BRAUN: Mrs. Bradley, when you met Milton he was already in the big leagues?

MONIQUE BRADLEY: Yes. . . .

BRAUN: [He] had a temper, correct? . . .

MONIQUE: I had heard about it, but I hadn’t seen it at that point.⁵

MICHELLE LIM (Los Angeles deputy city attorney): [Monique] was not a baseball groupie. . . . [Milton] had not become a famous baseball player yet. . . . They dated for two years before they got married.⁵

2004



The Dodgers acquired troubled—but talented—Milton Bradley from the Cleveland Indians. . . . He was pulled from an exhibition game Wednesday by [Indians] manager Eric Wedge for failing to run out a pop fly that dropped, [and] barred from training camp the next day. . . . In February, Bradley was sentenced to three days in jail for driving away from police after being stopped for speeding. Last year, he had run-ins with Dodgers catcher Paul Lo Duca and Yankees first baseman Jason Giambi, and threw his helmet and bat in the direction of plate umpire Bruce Froemming. —Associated Press

The Dodgers need some jerks who can play. —Bill Plaschke, *Los Angeles Times*

CHARLENA RECTOR (Bradley’s mother): The troubled relationship between Milton and Monique . . . has been off and on since they started living together before marriage. . . . Milton has never been the aggressor in any argument I have witnessed. Instead, Monique gets drunk and provokes the arguments.⁴

Major League Baseball suspended Milton Bradley for four games Thursday in response to the Dodger centerfielder’s on-field tirade during Tuesday’s game. . . . “When we traded for Milton, we knew everything that came along with it,” [general manager Paul] DePodesta said. . . . “I would take nine Milton Bradleys if I could get them.” —*L.A. Times*

2005

The off-season was filled with potentially life-changing experiences for Milton Bradley. He began counseling sessions to deal with anger management and other issues. . . . And, in a more positive vein, he got married in Las Vegas on Feb. 5. —*The Orange County Register*

Two days after the wedding Monique signed a prenuptial agreement.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: He made me sign it. . . . Mr. Bradley is very intimidating. . . . He just said, . . . “You didn’t think you were going to leave here without signing this.”⁵

Over the next eight years, Milton Bradley would claim Monique’s charges of abuse were efforts to increase the value of a potential divorce settlement. (Bradley did not respond to SI’s request for comment.)

FOOTNOTE KEY:

1. DIVORCE CASE, 2006

2. DIVORCE CASE, 2009–10

3. DIVORCE CASE, Feb.-June 2011

4. DIVORCE CASE, begun Sept. 2011

5. 2013 TRIAL, CALIFORNIA VS. MILTON O. BRADLEY

MILTON AND MONIQUE BRADLEY

At 4:58 p.m. on July 11, Monique Bradley called 911 from a neighbor's house. Redondo Beach police made the second of three visits to the Bradleys' home that summer. Milton Bradley was no longer there. Officer Mike Snakenborg took Monique's statement:

Victim said her husband grabbed her right hand and pushed her hand against her mouth, causing her to hit herself. . . . Victim said her husband grabbed her cellphone from a bedroom table and threw it towards the wall. Victim said her cellphone broke into several parts. . . . Victim said she followed him into the hallway. Victim said her husband turned around and used his right forearm and pushed her against the wall. Victim stated his forearm was against her throat and she was having a difficult time breathing. . . . Victim said her husband went around the house and picked up all the cellphones, house phones, her car keys and credit cards and left.

MIKE SNAKENBORG: She was upset and crying. . . . She indicated to me that she was pregnant. . . . She had a small cut on the inside of her lip that was bleeding.⁵

MILTON BRADLEY: She had a busted lip. . . . She was threatening, "Oh, I'm going to call the police" . . . and I'm like, "I'm not staying here because I didn't do nothing."

HARLAND BRAUN: Did you ever throw the phone at a wall or anything like that?

MILTON BRADLEY: I never threw the phone.⁵

MICHELLE LIM: Has [Mr. Bradley prevented you from calling the police] in the past?

MONIQUE BRADLEY: He'll take my cellphone and the house phones, and when he doesn't do that he says, "Call the police. You'll be dead by the time they get here anyway."⁵

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's office . . . declined to press charges in the July 11 incident because of "insufficient evidence." [Prosecutors' documents] read: "Victim was interviewed a [second] time and changed her stories." —*L.A. Times*

MICHELLE LIM: What kind of things would he yell at you?

MONIQUE BRADLEY: Tell me I was stupid, I was a bitch, a whore, slut, idiot.⁵

Milton Bradley is the Dodgers' nominee for this year's Roberto Clemente Award . . . which recognizes the player who best exemplifies the game of baseball, sportsmanship and community involvement, and the individual's contribution to his team. —Dodgers.com

On Dec. 11, Monique gave birth to the Bradleys' first child. Two days later, after two seasons in which Milton had verbal altercations with fans, reporters, teammates, his manager and umpires, he was traded to the A's.

MILTON BRADLEY: I don't know where the impressions about me come from. . . . I don't have a bad relationship with anyone. —*The Sacramento Bee*

2006

On Jan. 10, Milton Bradley filed for divorce, yet he and Monique continued living together.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: [Milton] insisted I accompany him in February 2006 to Arizona for his spring training. [He] then insisted that I go and live with my parents in Cleveland, Ohio, where I have been residing since March 13. . . . He constantly threatens me by phone and in emails that if I do not do as he instructs and make myself available on a 24-hour basis, that he will stop these [monthly spouse and child support] deposits.¹

2007

On June 29, after a series of injuries and a disagreement about his return to the lineup, Bradley was traded to the Padres.



MILTON AND MONIQUE BRADLEY

KEVIN TOWERS (San Diego general manager): He has somewhat of a checkered past. We certainly did our due diligence. . . . We felt it was worth it.

That fall Bradley was granted free agency by the Padres after he tore an ACL while arguing with an umpire. On Dec. 10, he signed with the Rangers.

JON DANIELS (Texas GM): We're not going to judge him on perception. —*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*

2008

In July, during his best offensive season (.321 average, .436 OBP), Bradley played in his only All-Star Game. He and Monique were still married, and she was pregnant again.

MILTON BRADLEY: In the summer of 2008, she left. . . . She went back to Ohio and, you know, gave me an indication that she was possibly going to get an abortion. . . .

HARLAND BRAUN: Did this turmoil affect your ability to play baseball?

BRADLEY: I never hit over .220 again.⁵ [Next season he hit .257.]

That winter the Rangers did not re-sign Bradley despite his career year. He became a free agent again and bought a new, 7,500-square-foot house in Encino, Calif., for \$3.7 million.

2009

On Jan. 9, Bradley signed a three-year, \$30 million contract with the Cubs.

His fiery attitude and, to a degree, his unpredictability is exactly what the Cubs need. —Dan Jiggetts, *Chicago Sun-Times*

In March, in Arizona for spring training, Monique gave birth to the Bradleys' second child. Her mother came to help with the baby, and Milton evicted her from the house.

MILTON BRADLEY: It's mine. You know, I bought a home. I can say who can come and go. I wouldn't want my mom staying with me, and I don't want her parents staying with me. So it's my prerogative. I bought the home, paid for it.⁵

Outfielder Milton Bradley's tumultuous season in Chicago ended when he was suspended for the final two weeks following comments he made [that] the Cubs were "not a positive environment." . . . "There have been a lot of issues that we've lived with during the year," [Cubs GM Jim] Hendry said Sunday, "but the . . . only real negativity here is his own production." —Cubs.com

MONIQUE BRADLEY: [Milton] had gone to Las Vegas . . . and had purchased some presents for me. . . . I told him that I did not want his gifts and he became upset. He opened one of the boxes . . . took out [a shoe] and hit me on the head with it.

MILTON BRADLEY: I never hit her with a shoe on the top of her head.²

MONIQUE BRADLEY: We separated in December . . . only to reconcile shortly thereafter.⁴

On Dec. 18, the Cubs traded Bradley to the Mariners, his eighth team in 10 seasons.

JACK ZDURIENCIK (Seattle GM): It's a new day, new way for this guy.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: Milton stated to me that he was going to lunch with Ken Griffey Jr. I [joked] . . . that maybe he could pick him up in his new overpriced car [a Rolls-Royce Phantom]. Milton . . . became furious with me. . . . He yelled that he hated me, that I made him sick and that he wanted me to leave. He got very close to my

MILTON AND MONIQUE BRADLEY

face in a menacing manner [Milton outweighed Monique by about 100 pounds]. . . . He then grabbed my laptop computer and smashed it on the floor. . . . He then grabbed my cellular phone and left. I was extremely frightened by his anger and was shaking. . . . The police met me at our residence. . . . That night I checked into a hotel with our children. . . . I believe that Milton's constant tirades, his anger and his unreasonableness are causing emotional harm to our young children. . . . I am afraid that Milton will actually take my life. . . . [He] has threatened to kill me before he lets me leave him with his money. . . . Milton makes these comments to me in front of our minor children. . . . Usually after he yells at me or calls me names he will send me a message that he is sorry, that he needs me and he will ask me not to leave. I have always forgiven him in the past. . . . Living under this pressure is causing me to have a great deal of stress and anxiety.²

MILTON BRADLEY: None [of our arguments] have escalated into a physical encounter. . . . Her claim that I have cursed her in front of our children is also untrue.²

MICHELLE LIM: You and Mr. Bradley continued to have a relationship. . . . Explain that to me.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: I knew I needed a divorce. It wasn't healthy. It wasn't right. But I didn't get married to get divorced, and I've tried to work on it.⁵

2010

On Jan. 9, the Bradleys argued at a Long Beach restaurant. Milton left Monique there and made the 40-mile drive home without her. Monique called the police and alleged that Milton pushed her in the chest.

MILTON BRADLEY: About 30 minutes later, a knock on the door. . . . [A policeman said], "Did you hit her?" I go, "No." . . . He goes, "Do you want to let her back in the house?" I said, "If she knows how to act." . . . [I told Monique] "Quit calling the f----- police for nothing," right in front of the cop. . . . So the cop left. . . .⁵

MILTON BRADLEY: I do everything I can to keep the peace in our relationship.²

MICHELLE LIM: Let's talk about you not being a good husband. Describe why you're not a good husband.

BRADLEY: Because I don't have a good wife.

LIM: So it's her fault you're not a good husband?

BRADLEY: You get what you give. It's one of my favorite quotes. . . .

LIM: You've called her dumb bitch?

BRADLEY: Yes.⁵

By December the Bradleys had dismissed their 2009–10 divorce proceedings. On Dec. 31 they were in New York City to celebrate the New Year.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: Mr. Bradley got in late . . . and he started arguing. He was already in a bad mood. And he took a hotel glass and threw it at me. It broke on my head. . . . I was in shock, and blood was just coming down my face. . . . I was trying to clean it up. He wouldn't let me go to the doctor. And he told me I was using too many towels . . . to clean up the blood. . . . I guess somebody called [hotel security] because they heard the disturbance, and [Milton] looked me in my eye and he held me and he's like, "Don't throw away everything we have," like this is his future, his job. So I protected him even though I'm standing there in blood and he didn't even care.

MILTON AND MONIQUE BRADLEY

HARLAND BRAUN (to Milton Bradley): Did anything like that happen?

MILTON BRADLEY: No.⁵

2011

Before attending a Lakers game on Jan. 17, Milton became frustrated when he could not find an expensive piece of jewelry. He blamed workers in the house and berated Monique for insufficiently monitoring them. After he left, Monique took the children to a hotel. Milton returned to an empty house. He called and texted Monique, demanding that she bring the kids to him. She did not. The next day:

VICT [Monique] was taking children to school, SUSP [Milton] followed VICT, pulled up beside her and stated, 'Bring back my kids or I'm gonna f----- kill you,' as he motioned as if slicing his neck with his hand. —Report by LAPD officer T. Houser

MILTON BRADLEY: I said, you know, "Cut this s--- out. Take my f----- kids to school." . . . I went like this [slashing his finger across his throat] which means, "Cut that out." Universally everybody knows that.⁵

While following Monique, Milton called her mother, Judith, in Ohio, demanding that she convince Monique to bring the kids home.

JUDITH WILLIAMS (supporting Monique's request for a restraining order that month):

He told me that if Monique did not return his children that he would "kill her."

I said to him that "you do not mean that, you are just upset." He said, "Yes, I do." . . .

MILTON BRADLEY: I [actually] said, "I don't really care if she kills herself, but she's got my kids in the car and she's going to kill them."⁵

Milton was arrested by the LAPD on Jan. 18 for making threats against a woman. Monique received an emergency protective order. Milton's bail was set at \$50,000, and he was released that afternoon.

HARLAND BRAUN: Monique Bradley . . . understands how devoted [Milton] is to his children, particularly because he was raised without a father. . . . Whenever she gets mad at Milton for something, she decides to take off with the kids.⁵

On Jan. 25, the restraining order expired, and Monique let Milton back into the family residence.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: Because I was still fearful for my physical safety, I hired a security guard to guard our home while Milton was present.³

In February Milton leaves for spring training with the Mariners.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: Although we have tried . . . to work out our relationship . . . our marriage cannot be saved. . . . I am moving forward with our dissolution proceedings.³

On April 12, the Bradleys had this virtually one-sided exchange of text messages.

MILTON: [Your lawyer] will get u killed. Tell the police. U f--- like a whore does u get whore treatment u deserve what u will get trust that.

MILTON: Play Russian roulette with your life and our children just proves my point.

MILTON: U have no power and never will.

MILTON: Bet u have a nice funeral. . . .

MILTON: Die then. Makes me none.

MONIQUE: Continue. It just moves you closer . . . to not having me.

MILTON: And u not having life.

On May 16, Milton Bradley was released by the Mariners, ending his major league career at age 33. He played 12 seasons for eight teams, batting .271 and earning \$48,222,300. He began living full-time

MILTON AND MONIQUE BRADLEY

at the family residence in Encino. On June 3 the Bradley vs. Bradley marriage dissolution case was dismissed. Milton and Monique tried again to reconcile. But on Sept. 27 Monique asked Milton where he was the night before—he came home very late—and, she said, he blew up and grabbed a baseball bat.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: He was pacing, he was sweating. . . . It was like a batting stance. He didn't swing it at me, though. . . .

MICHELLE LIM: Did he say anything to you?

MONIQUE: He said a lot. "I hate you. I'll kill you. You're nothing but a bitch." . . . [He walked away and put the bat down, but Monique could not call the police.] He took the phones and made me sit there . . . keys, phones, everything.⁵

On Sept. 30, Milton and Monique filed individually for divorce. In November, according to Milton, his agent arranged for him to have dinner with Monique—whom he was barred from seeing—and their kids. Monique then canceled, he said, and he found out that her parents were at the Encino residence to help care for her and the children. Milton sent a series of texts to Monique's father, Roger Williams.

MILTON BRADLEY: And u mfs need to get the f--- out of my house. And that goes for your ho of a daughter, too. Try me.

BRADLEY: I'm gonna embarrass your whole family when I prove what a groupie ho your daughter is.

Then he sent Roger Williams a video of himself and Monique having sex.

BRADLEY: That's your daughter getting f----- . . . and there's more where that came from.

MONIQUE BRADLEY (requesting another restraining order, on Nov. 16): [Milton] has the access code to our ADT security system. . . . [He] admits in his text messages that he knows when the security guard that I hired to protect me comes and goes. . . . I am concerned that [Milton] may possess a firearm. . . . [He] picked up a magazine entitled *2012 Buyers Guide Gun Annual* and turned to a page of a gun and said to me, "This is the gun that I'm going to kill you with."⁴

2012

In April the Bradleys vacation together with the children in Hawaii.

MICHELLE LIM: And why is it . . . that you would [travel with him]?

MONIQUE BRADLEY: When we got along it was the best. . . . I just always wanted to believe there was a better person.⁵

On Oct. 23, Monique suffered a black eye and bruising to the chest. She did not call the police.

MILTON BRADLEY: [Monique] walked into a door . . . and fell due to her heavy drinking, or because of her medical condition [Monique had recently begun suffering from chronic fatigue, abdominal pain and severe bloating, which caused her to bruise easily; doctors had been unable to explain her symptoms]. . . . The first thing she does in the morning is to start drinking wine. She continues to drink all day, every day.⁴ [Sylvia Rinacchi, the Bradleys' nanny from 2009 to '12, testified at trial that she never saw Monique drunk or smelled alcohol on her breath.]

HARLAND BRAUN: What is your opinion of her testimony that . . . you hit her?

BRADLEY: A sad story. [He would later say, "I didn't see an issue that she drank a lot."] ⁵

On Nov. 4, before attending a Lakers game, Milton Bradley smoked marijuana outside his home with a friend.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: I opened the door and said, ". . . Go somewhere else and do that."

MILTON AND MONIQUE BRADLEY



And he said I humiliated him, and he charged at me and he strangled me. . . . He lifted me by my throat . . . and threw me against this wall. . . . He carried me from here to here by my throat for maybe five or six seconds, and then he just kind of dropped me.⁵

MILTON BRADLEY (in a Nov. 28 text message to Monique about paying for her security system): U must have lost oxygen to the brain while getting choked out if u think [I'm] paying for your bogus security. Get the f--- out bitch!!!

2013

Milton Bradley has been charged with abusing his estranged wife and faces up to 13 years in jail if convicted, city prosecutors announced Friday. Bradley, 34, was charged on [Jan. 10] with 13 misdemeanor counts of assault with a deadly weapon, vandalism and dissuading a witness from making a report. —AP

On May 10, the trial of *The State of California v. Milton Obelle Bradley* began, with Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Thomas Robinson presiding. Monique testified while suffering from painful, undiagnosed abdominal swelling that made her appear pregnant.

HARLAND BRAUN: Do you think that if you convict Mr. Bradley of spousal abuse . . . would that assist you in [the divorce case]?

MONIQUE BRADLEY: No. I'm just speaking my truth. These are two different things. How he treated me and what I'm doing here today is my own therapy. It has nothing to do with money.⁵

SANDRA BACA (domestic violence expert): [For] women with upper-class [lifestyles], it's not that easy to leave [abusive spouses] because they don't always have the purse strings. . . . Then they want to talk about it with their peers and their peers don't want to hear [it]. . . . They become cut off from their support systems.⁵

On June 3, after a 12-day trial and two days of deliberation, the jury convicted Milton Bradley on nine counts, including inflicting corporal injury on a spouse or cohabitant, assault with a deadly weapon (a baseball bat), criminal threats and brandishing a deadly weapon. Because all are misdemeanors, he was allowed to make bail. Meanwhile, Monique's health worsened.

MONIQUE BRADLEY: Milton has even blocked my ability to submit my medical bills for any potential reimbursement because he refuses to provide me with the information for processing the claims.⁴

On July 2, Judge Robinson sentenced Milton Bradley to 32 months in prison and 52 weeks of domestic violence and anger-management classes. He was released on \$250,000 bail and remains free pending appeal.

JUDGE RUBINSON: Mr. Bradley . . . created and maintained an atmosphere of fear and of dread and of humiliation. . . . Monique Bradley walked around on eggshells in this house, and I imagine that their young and impressionable [children] . . . did so as well.

On Sept. 14, Monique Bradley died at Encino Hospital Medical Center. A death certificate dated Oct. 10 lists the causes as cryptogenic (i.e., of unknown origin) cirrhosis of the liver, hemorrhagic shock and cardiorespiratory arrest. She was 33.

2015

On Jan. 21, a Los Angeles appellate court rejected Bradley's appeal of his criminal conviction. Free pending a second appeal, Bradley has not spent a day in jail. He has sole custody of his children. □

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Glove Conquers All

→ BY STEVE RUSHIN



BASEBALL HIT ROCK BOTTOM the night I was born—Sept. 22, 1966—when the Yankees hosted the White Sox in front of 413 spectators. A day earlier the Cubs and Reds drew 530 fans to Wrigley Field while a “crowd” of 1,000 watched the Angels and Tigers in Detroit. Baseball was never lonelier, and I too was newly unattached—by a doctor, who began my life as ball games do: with a delivery.

We fell for each other. I put a picture of baseball on my wall, or at least of the Reds’ Joe Morgan. For five years in grade school, his is the first face I see every morning, and the last face I see every night. Scenes from a budding romance:

Oct. 9, 1973 Pete Rose hits a 12th-inning home run at Shea to beat the Mets in Game 4 of the NLCS. My mom is from Cincinnati—she and Rose share a hometown and a hairstyle—and I race off the school bus in Minnesota to see Pete rounding the bases on our Zenith, and Mom dancing on the shag carpet in joy.

How do you know if it’s meant to be? If you get down on one knee and pull out a ring, chances are you’re in love, even if you’re kneeling in an on-deck circle, and the ring is a weighted batting donut. But will baseball agree to love me—in sickness and health, for richer and poorer?

Summer of 1974 Dad returns from a business trip with a pack of baseball cards. As in many drug deals, the first hit is on the house. I peel back the wrapper to reveal a horizontal Steve Garvey, who is frequently horizontal in this decade. I will keep the card for 40 years.

Summer of 1978 My coach lays down a bunt in infield practice. Our catcher fires it to first base, where I’m lost in a daydream. The ball shatters my front teeth, setting in motion a lifetime of dental work. That night—stitched, swollen, toothless, hatted—I look like Mr. Met. As with an old married couple, I’m beginning to resemble my soul mate.

April 16, 1985 While running down a ball at Wrigley, Phillies outfielder Jeff Stone loses a shoe. Before he can retrieve it, a Cubs fan near me in the bleachers—in a drunken gesture of goodwill—throws a sneaker onto the field. The bleachers belch up another shoe, and then dozens are raining down on Wrigley, a Biblical plague of mateless footwear. And I think:

The start
of the
season is
the renewal
of a lifelong
romance—
and a
reminder
that
baseball
has
been the
backdrop
for too
many
special
moments
to count.



**What sport is
woven into the
fabric of your
life?**

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discussion on
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Who would want to be anywhere else on a Tuesday afternoon?

Sept. 5, 1991 I’m asleep in the Marriott on Michigan Avenue in Chicago, before a White Sox–Royals game, where I’ve been assigned a story on Bo Jackson. The phone rings: Mom has died. I fly to Minnesota with an overnight bag and stay for six weeks, until the Twins have completed their consoling run through the World Series. But not before Mom is ushered into the hereafter with the 1990 Reds still reigning as champions for all eternity.

Sept. 22, 2002 Wearing a V-neck Twins throwback given to me as a birthday present moments earlier by my girlfriend, I get down on one knee and pull out a ring. It’s not a weighted batting donut.

May 20, 2005 Diamondbacks starter Brandon Webb has a no-hitter in the seventh inning in Detroit when my tired wife, holding our screaming five-month-old, says we have to leave Comerica Park now. “Leave?” I say. “You can’t be serious.” A minute later, on the street and praying for a hit, we hear the crowd roar. A catcher named Pudge has legged out an infield single. It’s a sign from the heavens that I’m right to shift my loyalties.

July 10, 2014 A sweltering Thursday at Fenway. The kids want batting-helmet sundaes. The ice cream sends a sharp pain through my left incisor, broken 36 years ago. In the shade beneath the grandstand, we eat in front of an ancient oscillating fan. A woman sprays a spritzer bottle in the breeze, a makeshift misting machine. It could be 1912 or 1954, but we all agree—when the fan has turned its attention to us—that this is truly Fan Appreciation Day.

There are four kids now. After the game they get to run the bases at Fenway, the youngest wearing a hand-me-down glove, sprinting around a hand-me-down park, falling in love with a hand-me-down game. □



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